MAYFAIR

Vol. 23 No.6
ENTERTAINMENT FOR MEN

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MARIA WHITTAKER

makes her Mayfair debut

HELENE–THE TELETHON PRESENTER

our ex-cover girl's delightfully sexy poses

MAYFAIR

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95A Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1DZ
PRINTED IN ENGLAND
Vol. 23 No. 6
ABC net paid circulation 287,800

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Berenice Outram is golden and delicious, but not French. She's been sent from Coventry.

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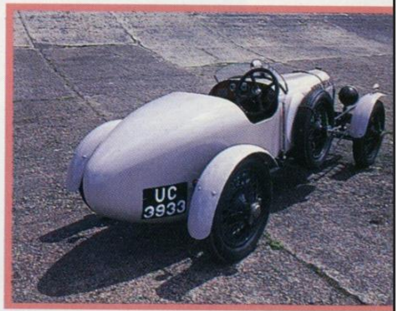

Marendaz cars may not mean a lot to you now, but just you look!

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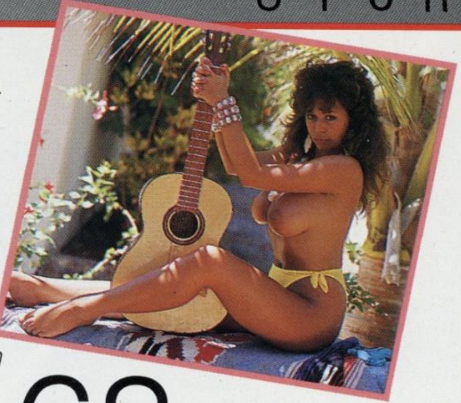

Top model Maria Whittaker is the biggest name on Page Three, and hundreds of you have asked us to reveal her 38D assets in full colour. We take her from *The Sun* to the sun for her spectacular *Mayfair* debut.

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Editor **Kenneth Bound** / Art Director **John Clement** /Assistant Editor **Clive Harris** /Sub Editor **Nigel Wackett** / Motoring **William Boddy** / Eating Out **Brian O'Hanlon** / Discs **Peter Hopkin** / Travel Editor **Ian Marlowe** / Films **Gerald Cole** / Wine **Charles Fforde**/ Editorial Assistants **Fiona Whitty** and **Lisa Oldfield** /Readers' Service **Pat Asquith**/Advertisement Director **Chris Robins**/published monthly by Fisk Publishing Co. Ltd., 95a Chancery Lane, London WC2. Reg. London No. 875169. Reg. Office 95a Chancery Lane, WC2/Distributed by Seymour Press Ltd., 334 Brixton Road, London SW9/Origination by Moorgate Lithoplates Services Ltd./Printing and binding by The Artisan Press Ltd., Beaumont Leys, Leicester, England/**Fiction:** all characters are fictitious and there is no intended reference to persons either living or dead/**Contributions:** although every care will be taken of all materials submitted for publication Fisk Publishing Co. Ltd., their servants or agents, accept no responsibility for loss, damage or destruction, however arising, while in their offices, in transit or elsewhere/Copyright — Fisk Publishing Co. Ltd., London, WC2.

The Art of Sec's Appeal

PHOTOGRAPHED
BY
ROY BREWINGTON

Every man in the world needs a little personal assistance from time to time. But with a good secretary ready to take things down at a moment's notice, there's no reason why he shouldn't end the day on top. So we asked an old hand at the game, Miss V Sweet, to demonstrate some of the skills essential for a happy office.

WANTED

MIKE S
PRIVATE IN
$300 REWARD

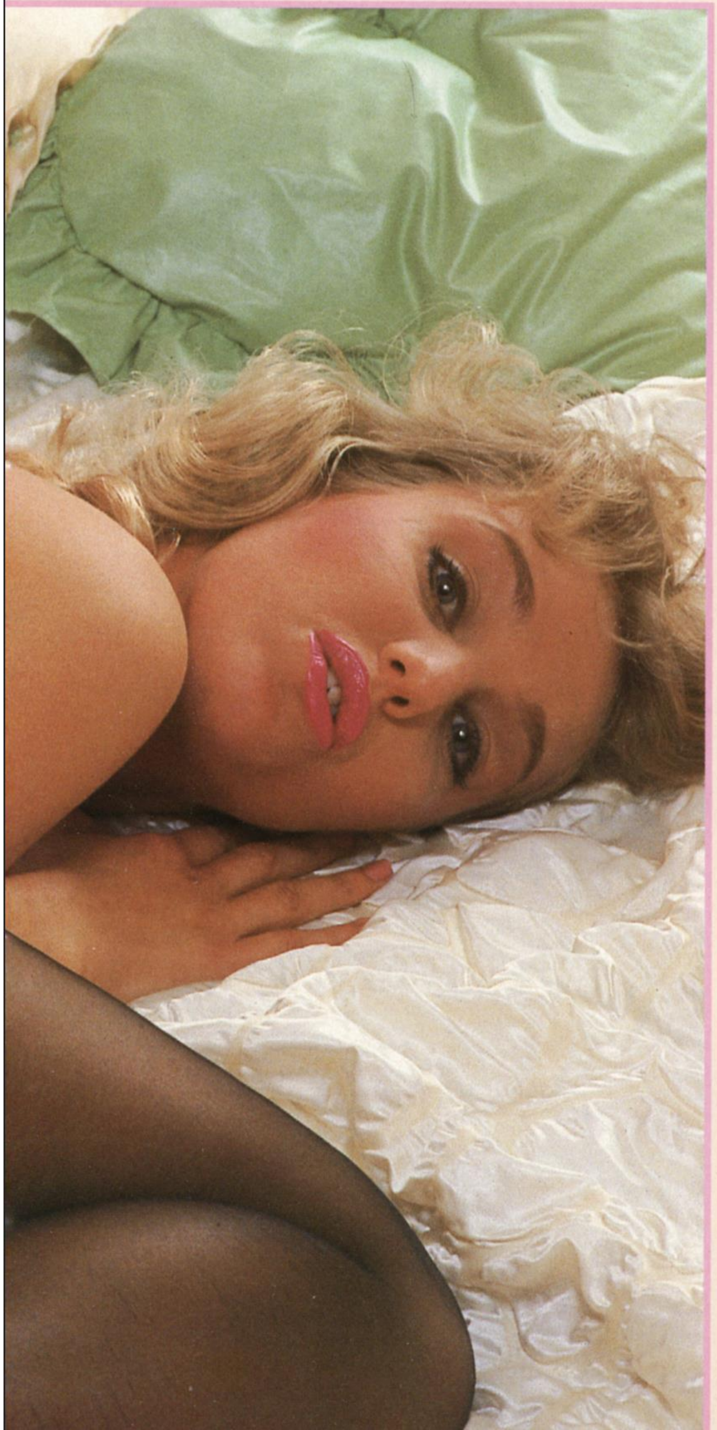
Miss Sweet says the first rule is to dress in a practical and pleasing way. A secretary should opt for cool outfits like the one shown, with lots of places for putting those easily forgotten items like rubbers. Try to avoid clumsy clothing like puff sleeve blouses, long necklaces or skirts and dresses of any kind. Secondly, poise is important. Sit up straight ready to be dictated to. Even after a hard day's filing (e.g. nails) don't put your feet up (as demonstrated, right). The boss might come in and think of something more arduous for you to do. Finally, Miss Sweet says — Hang on! We recognise that face! That's not Miss V Sweet, Officer Manageress of the Year, that's model Veronica Dolce who's never touched a drop of Tippex in her life. No wonder she was so keen to show us her Pitmans. Still, it was nice having her round the office, and some sec will take her advice!

ANNA

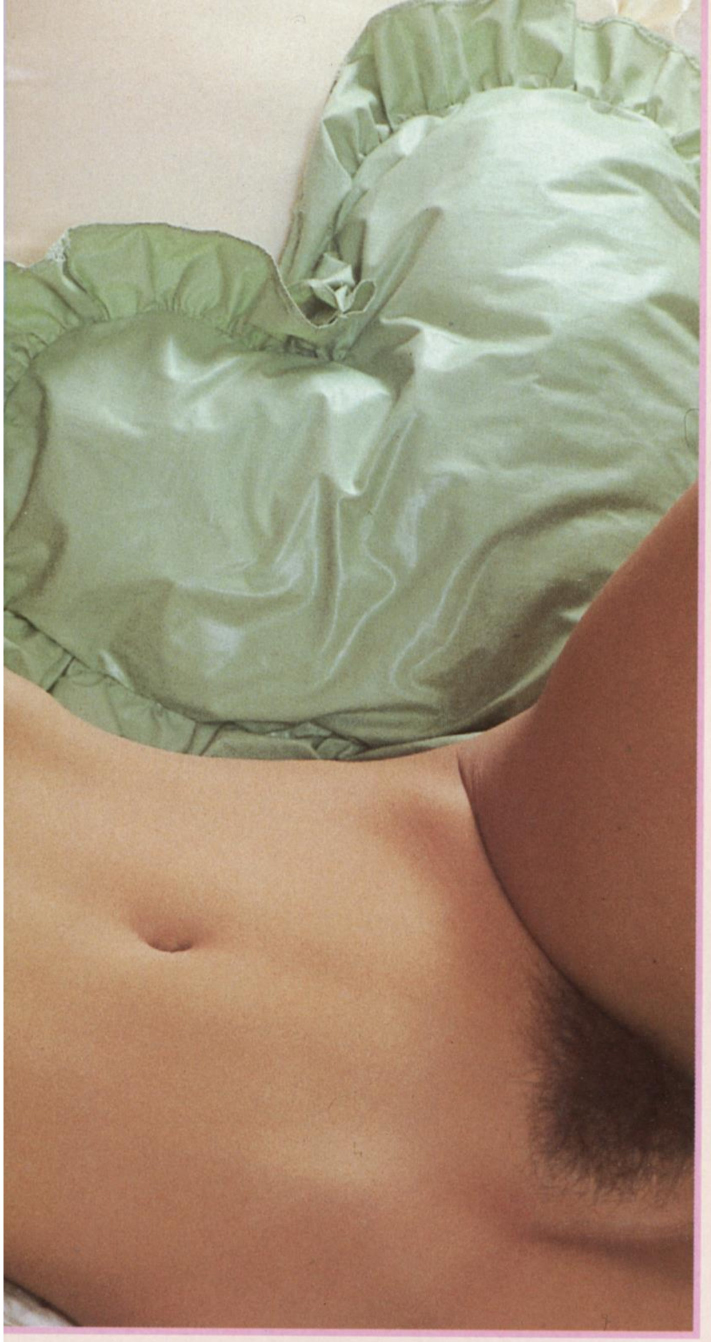
PHOTOGRAPHED BY ED ALEXANDER

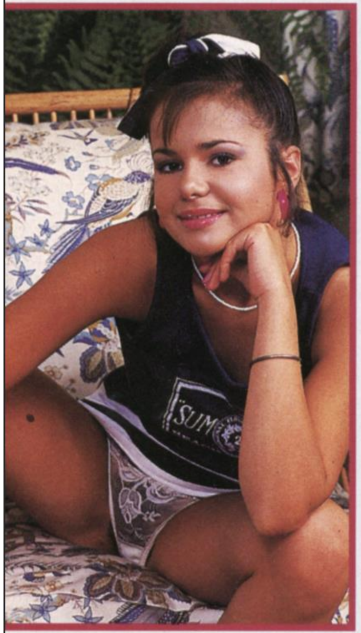
If you dismiss all lady show jumpers as the haughty, horsey type — think again. Twenty-year-old Anna Williams from the Wirral was once a specialist in the 'snootiest' event of all, the dressage, and knows the truth. 'We only put on that expression for the event,' she says with a strong Merseyside accent. In fact, Anna describes herself as 'a bit of a nutter' which might explain why she's choosen to give up work to become a full-time professional model.

'I've always wanted to be a model,' she says of this, one of her very first sessions. And even when she was working as a receptionist at Hearthrow's smart *Post House Hotel*, she dreamed of posing for the cameras. 'I'd really like to be a sex symbol like Marilyn Monroe,' she claims and at five foot nine and a 36-23-36 figure, she certainly has the right apparatus.



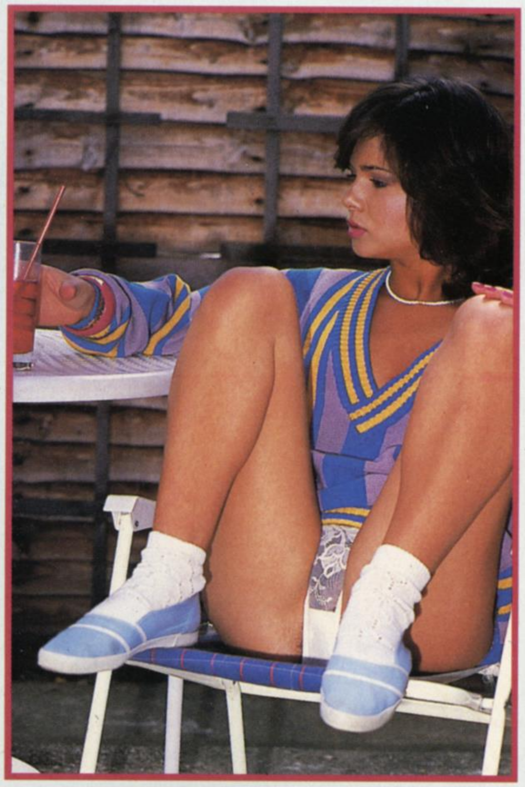
Anna also has a passion for clothes. Not jeans and teeshirts but slinky, skin-tight dresses that show acres of cleavage. And her favourite places for showing them off are London's top night clubs. 'I enjoy meeting the people there, especially if they have a sense of humour,' she says, and the men who make her laugh most are Richard Prior and Eddie Murphy. Anna likes older men around 35. But be careful she's begun learning jujitsu.





BERENICE

PHOTOGRAPHED BY
JON BERNARD



Berenice's surname is French — the Gallic connection is on her father's side — and her hobbies have a suitably Latin touch. She has earned certificates in Latin American and other forms of ballroom dancing. Otherwise she keeps in highly desirable shape by regular swimming sessions at her local baths. She actually started swimming at the age of three, and has since won an impressive array of medals and trophies, swimming for Coventry in competitions. She also represented her school in gymnastics. But her enthusiasm for physical activity does not extend to discos, only the music they play — Sade is a favourite.

She is, she admits, something of a home bird. Her ideal man would be of average build, nicely toned up with a suntan and preferably a German accent. But, for the moment, modelling fully occupies her thoughts. 'I love being in front of a camera, and I hope people ask for more pictures when they see me.' No doubt of it, Berenice.

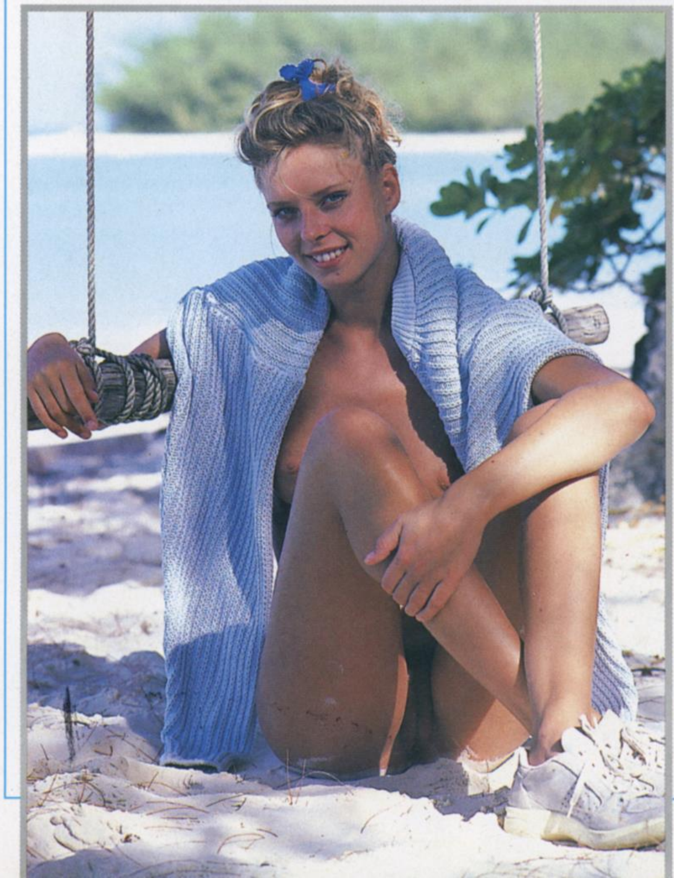
LESLEY

PHOTOGRAPHED BY JOHN PATRICK BURGESS

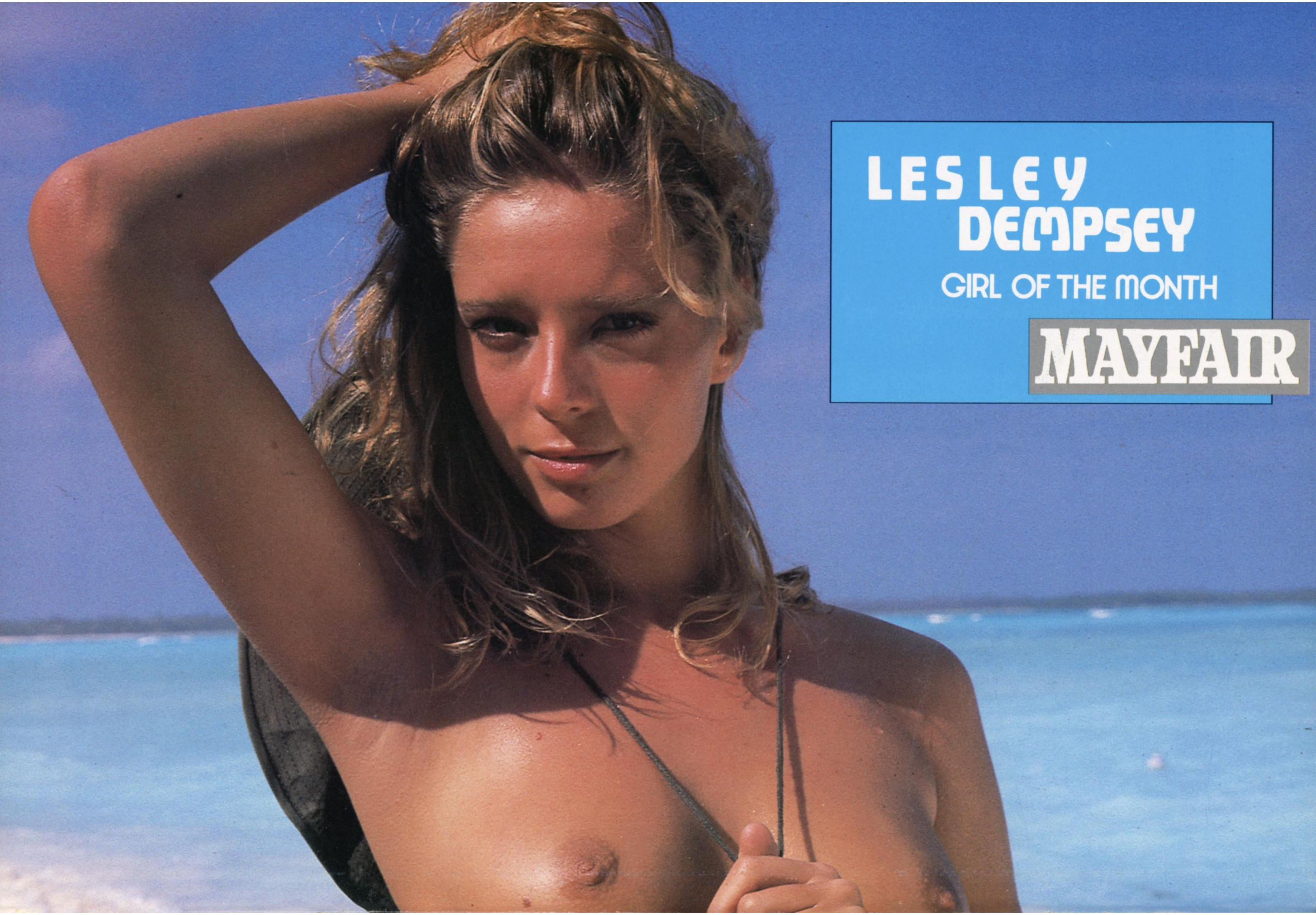
When attractive 21-year-old Lesley Dempsey was invited to pose nude for us in a secluded corner of the Mediterranean, she just had to laugh, it all seemed too much. Not only would she be 'shooting on location' but also appearing before the public. 'If this doesn't count towards my Equity card I'll scream,' she joked.

We spotted Lesley outside the Drury Lane Theatre late one Saturday night doing a rather strange, shuffling dance. Intrigued not only by this but also by her lissom 34-22-34 figure, we had to find out more. Her story began to unfold as she sipped a glass of red wine at *Maxwells* round the corner. 'I've just seen *42nd Street* and my feet just started dancing when I came out.'

Although Lesley is trying to make acting her career she admits to being a frustrated dancer. 'I find music and dance has a certain animalistic quality about it. Maybe that is why people find me a bit on the wild side,' she said suggestively, and lowering her voice whispered, 'I sometimes dance alone and naked to old jazz and blues records in front of my bedroom mirror.'



What a waste if there is no one with you, we probed. 'I guess if the right man came along, it might be fun. He'd have to be the powerful and adventurous sort. You know, the army type.' Knowing that the boys in the army are used to doing manoeuvres of a different sort, may we present for them the lovely Lesley, with just a little more equipment than she is used to.



LESLEY DEMPSEY

GIRL OF THE MONTH

MAYFAIR

US

LESLEY
DEMPSEY
GIRL OF THE MONTH
MAYFAIR
US

Maria Whittaker

PHOTOGRAPHED BY GEORGE RICHARDSON

She's Britain's most popular pin-up, the 38D-24-34 successor to Sam Fox's full-figured fame and the girl who most consistently tops the list of topless models our readers would most like to meet between the sheets of *Mayfair*. All the more reason, then, for snapping up memorable Maria Whittaker in a unique presentation for Britain's most acceptable men's magazine.

She's a model guest . . . and this
GLITTER
Move over, Sam. Maria's here!
MA-RIOT
Belly nice dancer...
COLOUR STUNNER
The liveliest girls are in the Liveliest Daily
CENTRE PAGES
TOYLAND KIC
EAUTIF
to give
Mmm, Maria takes
Magic Maria
OUR NEW GIRL IS VOTED TOPS!
FREE! Start saving coupons today
FASHION SPECIAL
dead . . killed off by 'The Plague'
SAY NO TO
take off with ace contest
Fred

Her rise was meteoric. Her dazzling smile, and even more dazzling figure, knocked out aficionados of the *Sun's* Page Three and by the end of her first year modelling she was voted the newspaper's second topless favourite, beaten only by her former idol, Sam Fox. Suddenly the quiet girl from Heston — who still lives at home with her mother, brother, younger sister and ex-boxer father — was jetting off to assignments from Canada to the Seychelles, while she was still just 17. Her 18th birthday was celebrated with a star-studded party at London's *Stringfellows* night club. But beyond all the glamour what is Maria really like?

Born 19 years ago on October 7, 1969 in the West London suburb of Heston, Maria was bitten by the modelling bug while still attending Cranford School in Middlesex, when her idol was Samantha Fox. Until then she'd been highly self-conscious about her most prominent assets. 'I didn't even want to go shopping with my Mum,' she says. But her skill at dancing had already started to prise her out of her shell. Her disco routines earned her top scores in over 30 championships, including the United Kingdom Youth Disco Championship at Hammersmith Palais, where 17-year-old Maria received her award from Sam Fox. A visit to a photographic exhibition — where she got more attention than the professional models — finally decided her on modelling.

Physically she's 5 feet 5 inches tall and, at the last count, weights just 8 stone 5 pounds. Her favourite food is chicken Kiev, her favourite tipple Moet et Chandon champagne, and her favourite colour red. 'It shows off my dark looks best,' she says. Her favourite hobby is shopping. 'I'm terrible, I'm a shopaholic,' she confesses. 'My mum and dad go mad. They think I'm spending all my money on dresses.' Since her clothing bill now ranges between £800 and £1000 a month they may have a point. And her favourite men? 'They should be good-looking, intelligent and wealthy enough to take me to the places I like going,' she once said. But the only male to share her bedroom at home has been her pet budgerigar, Joey, sent to her by an anonymous fan. Glue and feathers, anyone?

PHOTOGRAPHED

BY

JOHN GRAHAM

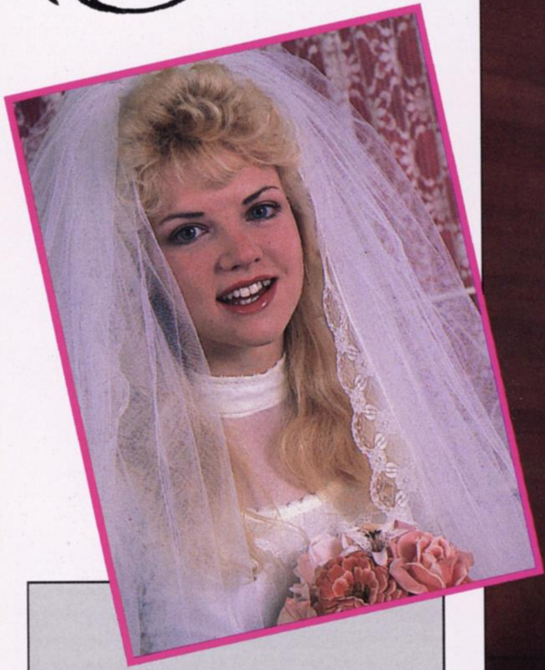
ELIZABETH

The Great British barmaid is a national institution thanks to girls like Elizabeth Rogers. Twenty-three-year-old Elizabeth pulls pints in an East End pub packed with a combination of Cockneys and filofax-wielding media men. It's a job that suits her perfectly. 'I'm an outrageous flirt,' Elizabeth says.

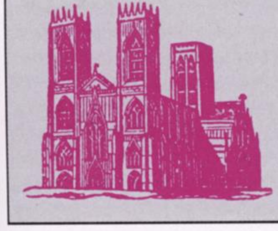
Which is why customers are used to seeing her 36C-24-36 figure crammed into outfits like this basque. 'I look on being a barmaid as a branch of show biz,' she says, 'and flashy trashy clothes are very important.' But Elizabeth's naughtiness doesn't end at closing time. 'I've always believed women shouldn't be afraid to make the first move with a guy she fancies,' she claims. 'And you should see some of my moves!'

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANTHONY JONES

Felicity

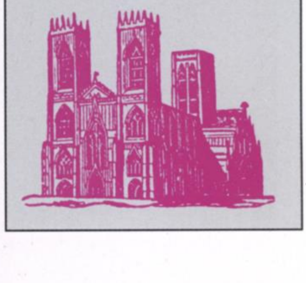


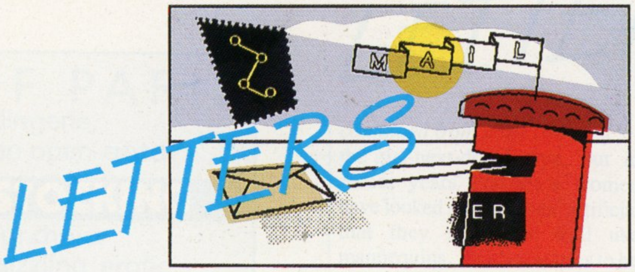
Leeds born Felicity Duncan is no stranger to being propositioned by men — her 34-23-34 figure and sparkling eyes see to that. But alas for us, she accepted the last proposal and next month will be married. As a grand farewell to her amateur modelling days and to being single, Felicity takes a final bow.



Felicity first started modelling at her local camera club whose enthusiasts were equally disappointed to hear that she was giving it up. 'It was their suggestion, or dare more like, that I should actually pose in my wedding dress,' said 19-year-old Felicity, adding with a grin 'And that's the sort of dare I can't resist.'

However, all that will change when she puts on the dress for real. 'I intend to be a respectable housewife, so enjoy it while you can.' Her intended is used to her doing outrageous things. She turned up to his fancy dress party wearing little more than balloons. 'He's very tolerant but I don't know what he will say when he finds out!'





You are invited to add to the controversy and anecdote of Mayfair. Letters must bear the full name and address of the writer, but if requested this will be reduced to initials and town of origin. All letters will be acknowledged, in a plain envelope, to the address given. Unsigned letters will be discarded.

Write to 'Letters', Mayfair Magazine, 95A Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1DZ.

Transatlantic tribute

I'm a 27-year-old Yank absolutely crazy about your magazine and it tops any of the American men's magazines on the newstands — it's truly second to none. Your models are very attractive, the epitome of femininity — young and shapely. No wonder so many American GI's married British women during World War II, I should be so lucky. Juliet, the bosomy teenager (Vol 23 No 3) was stunning — I would surely like to be her Romeo. Keep up the good work blokes!

A Simmons, Pennsylvania

Preferring us to US

Having just received Vol 23 No 3, I must once again compliment you on the excellent quality of your magazine. Juliet and Sophie are the prettiest girls in the issue; both are tastefully photographed and worth featuring again. While recently browsing the magazine stands, I have seen models in some American magazines shown in a very unattractive manner. Make-up is amateurish and often overdone, the poses are crude and vulgar the whole effect makes women look sluttish — which I find repugnant.

This is why I prefer *Mayfair* to most American men's magazines. Instead of pandering to the base sexual instincts, *Mayfair* celebrates women. Your models are always posed attractively, make-up is flattering and clothes and accessories are tasteful. The photos accentuate the women's beauty, and the accompanying text is never blantantly sexual, as in the American magazines. *Mayfair's* girls can be 'naughty', but they are always 'nice'.

Please maintain your policy of showing the world's most beautiful women in the most appealing fashion.

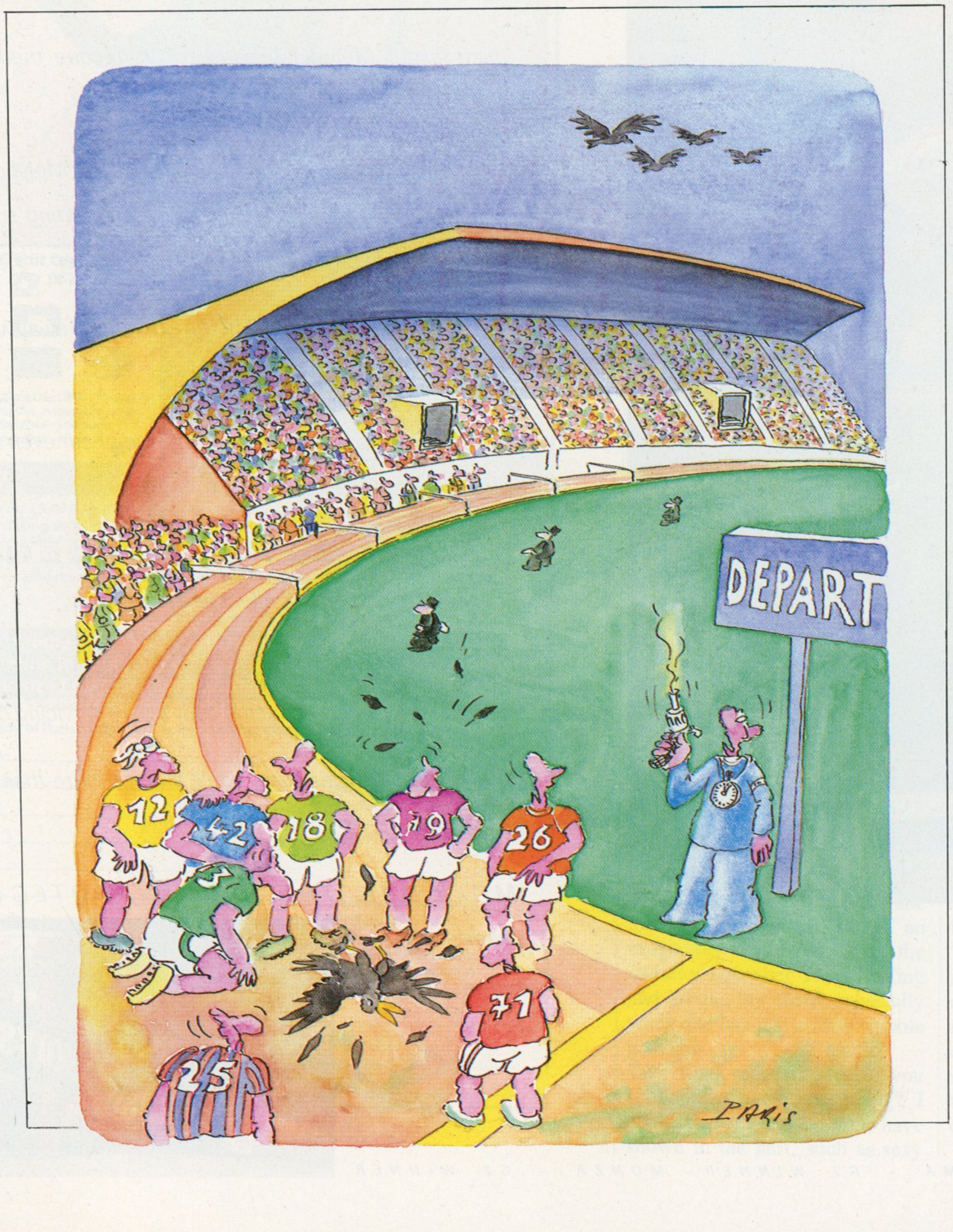
E Thomas, Los Angeles

No fire without smoke

May I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your latest issue, Vol 23 No 4. I thought that Kati-Jane was simply perfect and I could quite easily have fallen in love with her if it wasn't for the fact that my girlfriend (who is helping with this letter) would have killed me. I hope you will feature her again soon, possibly a two-girl set with her sister, Jennifer, Vol 22 No 12.

Also, it did me a great deal of good to read the comments of BB of Bristol in 'Letters', as I was beginning to think that I was unique in finding girls who smoke incredibly horny. It is a great disappointment to me that there are so few photographs of beautiful girls smoking in men's magazines.

DW, London



Ode to Jennifer

My passion for Jennifer's charms
Still smoulders like an ember,
And no new model ever calms
The love of last December

Still, it was nice of you to try —
You know how much I've missed her;
It wasn't hard to feast the eye
On photos of her sister

But truly no-one can compare
With Jenny's lovely form —
Her shapely curves uniquely rare,
Her smile so sweet and warm

So please now *Mayfair*, lend an ear:
We really like young Kati-Jane,
But if you want to make my year
Then feature Jennifer again!

RG, London

Two sensational

Your Quest feature on matchmakers brought back to me a bizarre but very pleasurable incident that happened to me just over a year ago.

I was a 20-year-old student at the time and on a camping and hiking holiday with a male college friend in the West Country.

At a campsite near Truro we began chatting up two girls who had a tent close to ours. They were a blonde

turn to page 14

WE OFFER A GREAT DEAL

Gorgeous Gail Thackray was in Vol 20 No 12. You missed her? Then buy a back number. Order individually from the list below or get our fantastic five-pack — Vol 20 Nos 6, 7, 8, 10 and 12 for only £5. But be quick!

Other back numbers available include:
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LETTERS

continued from page 6

and a brunette, both about 18 and quite attractive. They told us they were trainee nurses, and we seemed to get on well so we invited them to a pub disco we'd seen advertised in the nearest village.

I ended up spending most of my time with the blonde, who was the livelier and, I thought, more attractive of the two. Towards the end of the evening we got very chummy indeed; she squeezed close to me on our pub seat, seemed pleased when I put my arm round her and cuddled up cosily against me when we danced the slow, moody numbers.

When she suggested we go back to the campsite before the others so that it would be 'easier to talk' I was convinced she wanted to take things further, and I was right. At the campsite she offered to brew up some coffee for us, but as soon as we got into her tent I tried kissing her. She responded and we began kissing and cuddling on her sleeping bag.

She let me take her bra off and kiss and fondle her breasts — which felt beautifully squashy and full (she wouldn't let me light the lantern in case passersby saw our shadows), though she wouldn't remove her tee-shirt. Then I put my hand under her skirt and slipped my fingers into her knickers. She said she wasn't sure if I should touch her there, but she felt very moist to me, so I began stroking and fingering her.

Even though she went on saying we shouldn't, she didn't try to stop me and she appeared to get quite excited. But then she became very insistent that she'd had enough, and I withdrew.

I was sure I'd got as far as I was going to, when she asked me to come back — I could only have moved a couple of feet across the tent. So I did what she asked, and she seemed keen for another kiss and cuddle. As we rolled together I reached down her thigh again and suddenly realised I was feeling bare skin — she'd obviously taken her pants off. So, fumbling on a crumpled Durex I'd kept in the back pocket of my jeans for longer than I cared to remember, I opened her legs, eased between and slipped my cock insider her.

Since it had been so long since my last screw (which had actually been my first) I came fairly quickly. As we lay recovering she was very quiet and I wondered if she'd regretted what had happened. I even had a pang of guilt that I might have forced her to go further than she really wanted, and thought perhaps I had been a bit of a bastard, since she was so young, and probably as inexperienced as I was.

That feeling lasted about thirty seconds, because the tent flap was suddenly yanked back and her brunette friend crawled into the tent and immediately turned on a battery powered lantern.

Of the three of us I was the only one who seemed to show any surprise. I quickly pulled part of the sleeping bag over my exposed crotch, but the blonde simply sat up — incidentally giving me my first view of her breasts which looked as full as they had felt in the dark.

Without bothering to pull her tee-shirt down and cover herself, she started talking to her friend, asking how the other girl had got on with my friend.

The brunette shrugged and said he was 'a bit eager — he obviously doesn't get it very often.'

I didn't know what to be more surprised at — the fact that the brunette had obviously had sex with my friend, or that she was so unfussed about discussing it openly and in detail. Far from feeling myself 'a bit of a bastard' I began to wonder who had actually seduced whom.

By now the girls had been talking for some minutes and neither had even acknowledged my presence. Starting to get a bit annoyed, I went to get up, when the brunette nodded at me and asked the blonde how I'd been.

'Alright,' the blonde said, looking at me for the first time with a kind of grudging half smile. Then she said, 'It feels like a nice one.'

The brunette was grinning by now and began moving across to us. 'Can we have a look?' she said.

That was when the blonde suddenly jerked the sleeping bag off my lap, and both girls immediately burst into loud giggles.

When I went to cover myself again, the blonde slapped my hand, snapping at me, 'Don't!'

So I found myself leaning back — not knowing whether to be embarrassed or shocked or flattered — while both girls bent their heads over my crotch, still giggling and casting sly, wary little looks at me.

'More to it than the other fellow's,' said the brunette. 'What's it like when it's ready?'

'Why don't you see?' said the blonde and gave me an arch look.

'Don't you mind?' the other girl asked. No one thought of asking me!

The next thing I knew was warm

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LETTERS

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fingers sliding under my still, just-about-limp cock.

I gave a violent start, and the blonde promptly threw herself across my chest, pushing me back down, and telling her friend, 'Go on'. The brunette then took hold of my cock again and began pumping it — rather delicately and warily. After the initial shock, the effect was entirely predictable. I gave a groan and felt myself jerk and stretch to my full extension.

The brunette's response was to give a little shriek and let go of me, while the blonde tightened her grip, obviously afraid I was going to throw her off in protest, though I was much too curious to know what happened next.

In fact there was a short silence then a whispered conversation between the girls. I caught the blonde saying 'Don't worry —' then she turned to me and said, 'Are you ready to go again?'

For one delirious moment I thought I was being offered the chance to screw the brunette as well as the blonde, so I said I was fine. There was another mumbled piece of conversation, the the brunette's fingers closed round my by now very stiff penis and immediately began to tug at my foreskin.

The feeling was exquisite and I wallowed in it for a moment, until I had my first involuntary twitch and took a gulp of breath. Instantly I saw the brunette's head go down, and I felt her warm, wet mouth closing over my swollen tip. At the same time she began pumping my foreskin much more vigorously than before.

Since this was actually the first time I'd experienced oral sex, I didn't hold back for very long. But I do remember the blonde turning to gaze at me, apparently fascinated, as my climax overtook me and I let go.

I crept back to my own tent and found my friend bursting to tell me what he'd been up to with the brunette — until I stole his thunder with my own story!

By the time we surfaced in the morning the two girls had gone, and we never saw them again, even though we searched all the other campsites in the area.

I've had a reasonably active and satisfactory sex life since, but nothing has quite matched the excitement of my first (and only!) twosome.

PR, Stafford

'I understand it's going to be a poster for Women's Lib . . .'

Dream girl come true

Many, many thanks for your pictures of Minka Kokos in Vol 23 No 3. They were like a dream come true. I first saw Minka in the *Daily Mirror* and immediately fell in love with her, cutting out her picture and scouring the tabloids for more views of her. But I never thought I'd be rewarded with such a fabulous and revealing set of photographs as those you published. Minka is my ideal woman, perfect combination of pretty, sweet-faced 'girl next door' and an incredibly erotic body.

Please persuade her to pose again as soon as possible.

RL, Leeds

Double exposure

My girlfriend, Ellen (name changed), and I were fortunate to stay at the San Fillipe Hotel in Puerto de la Cruz, Tennerife, last week.

Our room was on the 15th floor and it occupied the corner so that one of the large balconies looked up towards Mount Tiede and the other to the cliffs and sea. The people at the hotel were all rather well-to-do and older. As a result, Ellen didn't feel very comfortable sunbathing topless and almost bottomless at the swimming pool. So in the afternoon we went up and she sunbathed nude on our balcony.

By the third day she was rather tanned and so we took lots of pictures of Ellen naked with the mountain or cliffs as a back-drop. While we were sunbathing for our morning session we thought it would be good to take a picture of her on the balcony from the pool using the telescopic lens. However we realised when we got to our balcony that the glass in the balcony rail would obscure the view. So I agreed to walk the two miles or so up the back of Puerto to the cliff top known as La Paz so that it would be possible to take the shots from an angle higher than the 15th floor. Before setting off, we agreed certain poses as I would not be able to direct her. She would not be able to see me clearly as I didn't quite know where I would be able to take the shots from. So she said she would start going through her pose routine from about 30 minutes after I left. To my surpirse it only took 15 to 20 minutes via a well developed path, made of super mosaics and palm tree-lined, to get to the top.

I found an excellent location right across from our room which was a purpose-built 'beauty spot' platform on the cliff top. I found an ideal angle and sat to wait the 10 to 15 minutes before Ellen would start to pose.

A Dutch guy of about 45 or 50 years old came over and asked if he could just use my camera with its lens just to look at something. I asked him what it was and he told me that for the past three days he had seen a lovely girl naked on the balcony of the hotel but didn't have any binoculars to see more clearly, but with my camera lens he should be able to get a much closer look at her.

I gave him my camera and he focussed on our room. 'Yes', he said, 'she is there totally naked. But she is even more lovely than I thought'.

I asked him how much he had seen and he said 'With the naked eye you can only see that she is nude and that she has a good figure but through your camera I can see everything'. He had attracted the attention of a group of men who were away to our left. It turned out that they had seen Ellen as well and they also wanted to look through the lens. I felt a twinge of guilt as I let first one then another have a better view of my girlfriend. After a short time, I saw Ellen move to the back of the balcony and take up the first agreed position. With her legs wide apart, she leaned against the wall. I took my first picture. Ellen then went into our room and came out with her high heeled shoes on and went back to position one, against the wall. For about 2 to 3 minutes she went through all the agreed poses and I snapped the lot. When she had finished, she lay down again.

The audience didn't realise that I was there to take the pictures — they just thought it was pure luck that she had stood up and I'd taken the pics.

Feeling quite pleased I said goodbye to the Dutchman and the others and set off down the pathway back to our hotel when I saw walking past me on the way back to the platform one of the men who had seen Ellen. This time he had a tele lens with him that was much more powerful than mine. I knew that Ellen would wait 10 minutes, then go into her routine again, and that a complete stranger would have some very sexy photographs of the girl I love. But there was nothing I could do. I was hoisted by my own petard.

So now in Germany, some fellow will be getting his pictures back from the labs and they will be very horny indeed.

DH, London

Hardly hair-raising

I want to tell you that *Mayfair* is far superior to any other similar magazine in America. It can be hard to obtain but is well worth the effort. *Playboy* used to feature

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LETTERS

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went for a swim, the older one had left about half-an-hour earlier.

I don't mind admitting that I am equally at ease in the 'company' of both men and women — something which my ex-husband couldn't handle but which my future husband is looking forward to! Therefore, the thought of Charlotte and I alone in the sauna after after a few 'G and T's' made me quite excited. This excitement intensified when Charlotte stripped off. She was dark-haired, average height and had a lovely shapely figure — the type men adore and most women are envious of. Mind you, I'm no slouch and I was given a great ego boost when Charlotte complimented me for staying in great shape.

We went into the sauna and the inevitable happened. I started to smooth and caress Charlotte's legs and finding no opposition whatsoever, I worked my way up. We were both sweating quite a bit, too much really, and so we went for a shower. I went into one and was followed by Charlotte.

Now up to this point, I could tell my future husband about it, but it was what happened next that has caused me to write to you.

Charlotte's boyfriend walked in and was delighted to see us together. I was delighted to see him when he slipped off his bathing costume and produced the biggest penis I've ever seen, and that was without an erection.

We moved out of the showers and into the 'rest area' in the ladies changing room. Charlotte slipped the lock on the door and her boyfriend, Stewart (name changed), started to dry me with his towel. It was a wonderful feeling that got better when Charlotte started to caress the dry bits. Meanwhile, Stewart started to fondle my boobs. Moving behind me, I felt his shaft growing bigger. The combined feeling of this, and Charlotte down below made me start to ache.

I needed to be fucked by the time they had finished, and Stewart gladly obliged. I straddled his fully erect cock and almost fainted as I eased myself down. I couldn't take it all this way but it was enough to bring me to a wonderful and very loud climax. Then Charlotte straddled Stewart. I was impressed when Charlotte did finally manage to take the whole length.

Charlotte said she needed a rest. This was an excuse for me to pay full attention to Stewart's penis. First of all, Stewart satisfied his desire and took me from behind, gently and very expertly. Then I decided to emulate Charlotte and take his whole length. This was achieved in the loudest missionary position I have ever been in — the combined moans of Stewart and I, plus Charlotte enjoying the show from the sofa, made for quite a noise.

After this, Stewart went to his own changing room, leaving me with half-an-hour alone with Charlotte. It was one of the best days of my life.

So much so, that I am going to tell my future husband about it, knowing a threesome with him could follow.

JE, Cardiff

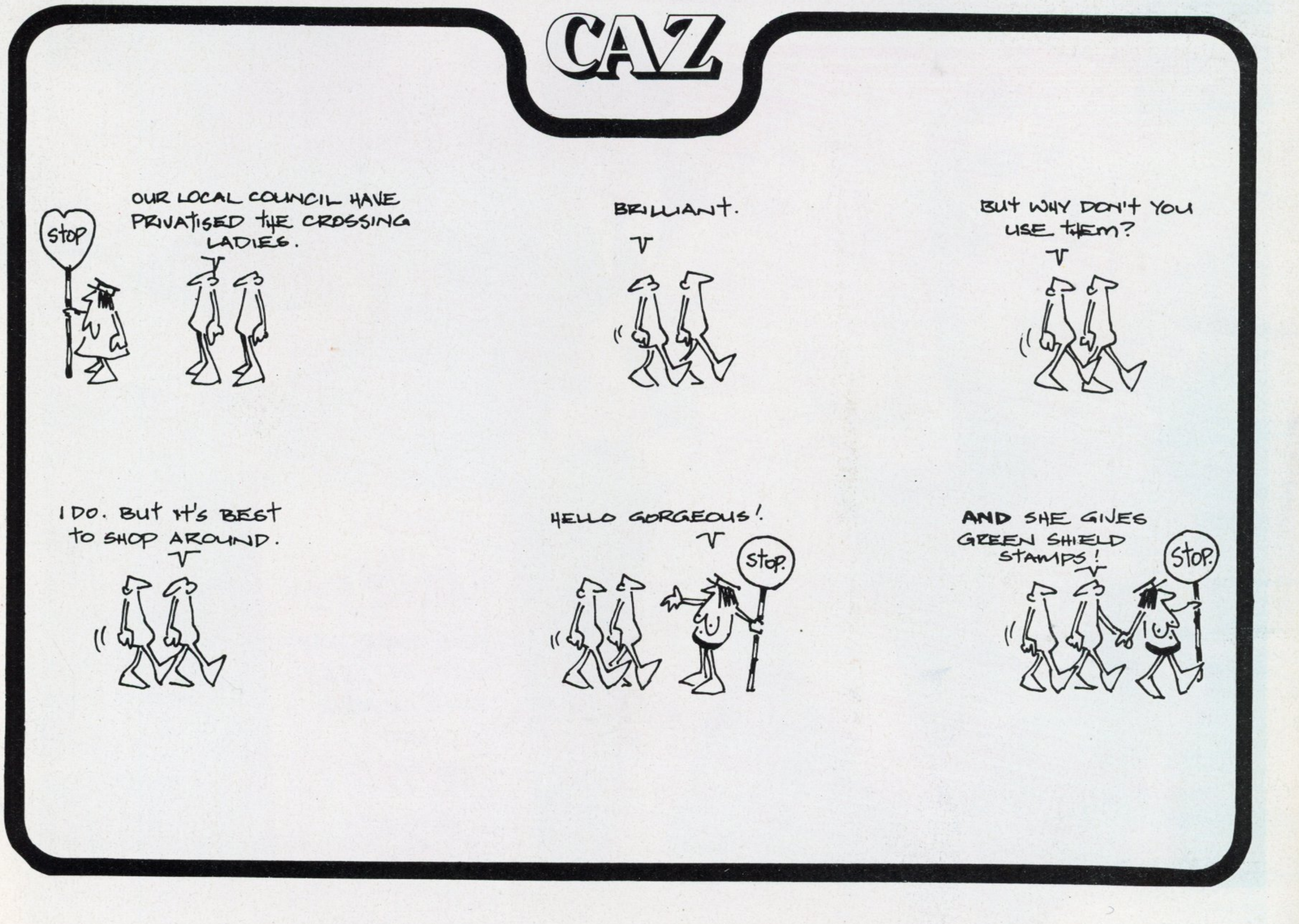
Getting into Europe

Congratulations on Vol 23 No 4, and, as an ardent pro-European, I am glad to see that *Mayfair* is doing its bit for the forthcoming opening up of the Common Market. Veronica Dolce, the 36C-24-36 Dutch model from Sbykengsse near Rotterdam was absolutely gorgeous. She not only had superbly rounded boobs and lovely lips, but the kind of open, wide-eyed look that is a positive challenge to the male libido. A sensational girl with lots of impact. The Polish centregirl Urzula was another winner — the sleek, blonde type with classically pretty features. She can come and perform some *perestroika* on my sex life any day of the week! Just imagine — there's half a continent of fabulous females on the the other side of the Iron Curtain yet to be bared! If *glasnost* is going to become this glamorous, how can it possibly fail?

EN, Strathclyde

We look forward to the day when we can run pictures of Miss Moscow. Incidentally, if you turn back to page 8 you will find Veronica makes another appearance.

We welcome all your views, comments and anecdotes. Please write to 'Letters', Mayfair Magazine, 95a Chancery Lane, London, WC2A 1DZ.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LETTERS

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the'girl-next-door' type, but in recent years *Playboy's* women have looked so plastic and artificial that they might as well use mannequins. *Penthouse* tries to be too arty, instead of just letting the models look natural. Other American magazines like *Hustler* are just plain gross. They make sex look disgusting, and the graphic close-ups seem better suited for a gynecologist's manual.

The women in *Mayfair*, on the other hand, look sweet and sexy, and best of all, real. I especially like those photo-features that begin with a pretty model completely dressed and continue with her gradually stripping off until she is naked. The act of stripping is immensely erotic.

Some time ago you had a spate of letters about women who let their hair grow in their armpits, with most writers asking for more photos of such ladies who like to go natural. I also find pretty women with armpit hair to be both erotic and exotic, and many, especially those with dark hair and complexions, remind me of the many sexy women I saw while vacationing in Mediterranean countries like Italy, Greece and Israel. As I am sure you know, American girls rarely go for such natural adornments.

I think one reason why hair in a pretty lady's armpit is sexy is because it is very similar to a lady's pussy. It is sensitive to the touch, it gets warm and moist and emits a bodily fluid and a special scent. With its folds and creases, it even looks the part.

Yet, you have presented very few such women in *Mayfair*. The last one I can recall was Jenny in Vol 20 No 1. The only other one I can think of was the exquisite Joanne Latham in Vol 17 No 10. Is there no way to convince some of your models to let their armpit hair grow for the benefit of the many appreciative men like me?

My wife, Mandy (name changed), is a pretty brunette who, at my request, has let her hair grow under her arms. She admits that she gets a little self-conscious in summer when she wears sleeveless dresses or bathing suits, but she knows that the armpit is an erogenous zone and loves the attention I give her. I love tickling and kissing her there, especially when she has just a little stubble growing.

Two final requests — can you show more nurses stripping? I appreciate the ones you have shown in the past, such as sexy Andrea in Vol 19 No 4, but it is something that is hard to get enough of. As you may know, *Playboy* did a nude photo-layout of nurses in November 1983, but in their efforts to appease feminists they wouldn't show any stripping out of their uniforms or in work settings. By doing so they tried to satisfy everyone and ended up satisfying no one.

Also, you have had many requests to show sexy young women in slap-stick situations, like a pie fight with messy desserts getting in their hair, on their boobs, and in their panties. Is there any chance of you ever showing a photo-feature like that? I have been waiting for years.

KD, Massachusetts, USA

Squash courting

I enjoy reading your letters pages, and wonder what motivates readers to write in the first place. I asked my ex-husband but he found it difficult enough to come to terms with the fact that it was I, not he, who bought and enjoyed your magazine. I didn't come to any satisfactory conclusion but I know why the majority of people write . As most of the cases occurred outside an existing relationship, they are unable to tell anyone, they need to confide to someone and so write to you.

I came to this conclusion after a recent issue, and my ideas were confirmed when I myself experienced something which I find I can only tell you. I'm 32 years old, divorced due to certain irreconcilable differences, but I am about to marry again. I am still attractive probably because I have not had any children and the fact that I play a lot of tennis and squash. It was while I was at the squash club that my 'secret' happened. It was mid-afternoon — the time when most people work, so the club was fairly deserted.

I was making my way out when I bumped into someone I recognised. It turned out to be an old neighbour from the time when I was still married. The reason I didn't recognise her fully was because I remembered her as a spotty 15-year-old. She was now a very attractive 20-year-old.

She was with two men, one about her age, the other about my age. We decided to continue the reunion in the club bar. After a couple of 'G and T's', I realised I was in no fit state to drive. Charlotte (name changed), my old neighbour, suggested I should 'sweat it out' in the sauna. Charlotte's younger companion — her boyfriend —

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SCENE FROM MAYFAIR

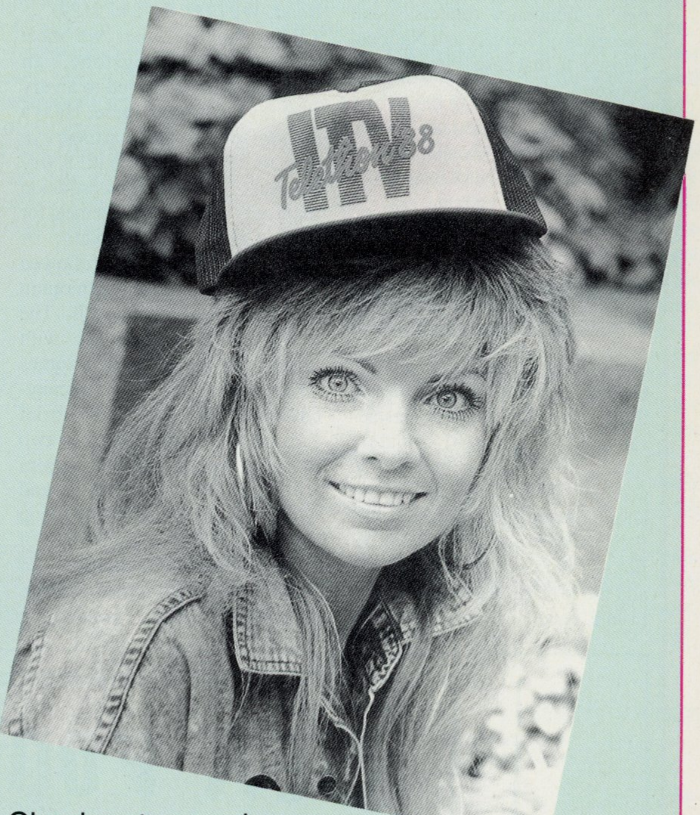
It's Helle on the telly

One of *Mayfair's* most popular cover girls is bubbly blonde Helene Hunt. Hardly a day goes by without readers asking for another appearance by the young lady from Heswell, Merseyside, and already she had starred on the front of Vol 16 No 3 and *Best of Mayfair No 1*. Well, it seems we are not her only fans, as Helene was chosen as one of the presenters of the ITV Telethon on May 29/30. This is the longest show ITV has ever produced lasting 27 hours and linking all the stations in the network in the name of charity. Hosted by Michael Aspel, Helene is working both with him in the studio and with business expert Michael Wilton at the outside broadcast at Hayes Wharf. Though this is far from being her TV debut (Helene has also appeared with comic Kelly Monteith and in episodes of *Bread* and *Help*) it's her first live presentation job. 'I'm really nervous,' she told us before the event. 'But I just intend to go out there and be me.' Helene adds that she'd like to be the next Anneka Rice. 'I'm prepared to have a go at anything,' she says. Perhaps that might explain why Helene disappeared from the modelling scene to spend two years living on a boat and scallop diving in Western Scotland! *Mayfair* readers may remember her better (right) as she posed for these pictures commissioned by us some years ago. If she can't raise money for charity no-one can!

For a hard day's night

From the magazine that was the first to tell you about the tune-playing tanga-pants (*Just a song at thigh-height*, Vol 23 No 3), may we present the latest way to listen to a great Beatles classic. Yes, it's the musical condom! Currently only available in Japan, the sing-along sheath accompanies your performance with its own rendition of the Liverpool lads' *Love Me Do* (shouldn't they have chosen *Johnny B Goode?*). The music comes from a micro chip and is said to be triggered at the 'peak of excitement' — contraception, you might say, by the rhythm and blues method. What's more the packet of three with the Fab Four is a hit with the Family Planning Association. Charlotte Owen of the FPA has been quoted as saying, 'We

HELENE HUNT, AN EX-*MAYFAIR* COVER GIRL NOW LIKELY TO MAKE IT BIG ON TV FOLLOWING HER DEBUT AS A PRESENTER ON ITV'S TELETHON. ON THE RIGHT IS A SELECTION OF PICTURES FROM A SESSION THAT WE COMMISSIONED SOME YEARS AGO, PLUS A VIEW OF HER TODAY. SHE HASN'T CHANGED A BIT, DESPITE A SPELL ON A SCOTTISH FISHING BOAT!



welcome anything that helps dispel the fuddy-duddy myths surrounding the condom. If it takes musical condoms to make men wear them, that's good enough for us!' However campaigners for less promiscuity will probably insist there should be no numbers by The Bachelors. It gives a whole new meaning to 'have you heard Rick Astley on 12-inch?'

Greenwich Armada

Our main feature this month (or should we say our Spanish Main feature?) is a fascinating insight into Drake's defeat of the Armada. As you may have heard, it was 400 years ago this year that the English repelled the Spanish (though some would say our tourists have been doing so ever since) and destroyed Philip II's invasion plans. In The Armada starting on page 20, author Edwyn Gray uncovers all kinds of facts the school text books choose to omit. For example did you know that amongst the crew on the Spanish ships were a good number of Welshmen? ('No wonder they sunk,' says our Jokes page editor, 'their boats were full of leeks!' Don't worry his contract is up for renewal in August). Illustrating the feature are paintings from our old friends, the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich who are celebrating the anniversary with true style. Their Armada exhibition is open until September 4, and contains a spectacular array of artefacts from the period including jewellery recovered from the Spanish ships by divers many years later, weapons and a re-creation of Drake's famous drum. *The Golden Hind*. Like ourselves, the museum is also re-investigating many of the 'facts' surrounding our defeat of the mighty Spanish fleet. It seems it could well have been all down to the weather. The exhibition is open seven days a week (10am-6pm Monday to Saturday, 2pm-6pm Sunday) and costs £2.20 for adults and £1.10 for children (also including admission to the Greenwich Observatory). Our editor says he's going just as soon as he finishes his game of bowls . . .

Check-out your wine

So you've persuaded the cool sophisticated blonde to come back for a glass of wine. You've prepared soft music and softer lights, and bought a bottle with a pretty label from the supermarket. You pour it, only to find instead of the sweet and fruity taste you expect, it's a sharp dry white ideal with fish but hardly the tipple for a romantic evening. Suddenly the evening is flatter than last night's lager. Wine may be in almost every supermarket but there are still plenty of us who don't know their Astis from their elbow. Now Sainsbury's, the chain with the largest selection of own-label wines, have published *The Sainsbury's Book of Wine* to help us choose what we want. Written by Oz Clarke and priced £5.95, it provides a guide to grapes, areas and the wines themselves. Most useful of all is an A-to-Z guide of terms so you too can impress your girl with the jargon — and actually know what it means! If you like wine but think *blanc de blancs* is a game show, this book is for you.

The bonking dic

At last, it's official. The verb 'to bonk' beloved by the tabloid press has been recognised as the Queen's English. It's one of 1,500 new words and phrases contained in the new Collins Concise Dictionary priced £9.95, Bonk is defined as a verb meaning 'to have sexual intercourse (with)' and features along with other new entrants like 'toy boy', 'Awayday' 'Cellphone' 'pyjama cricket' and 'gossypol' (the substance being researched as

SCENE FROM MAYFAIR

a male contraceptive). Although the word's derivation is not listed, the giant computer at Collins tells us that 'bonk' was first used by a reporter for the *Daily Record,* in an unpublished news story he filed, though its first appearance in print was in *The Sun* a couple of days later with the headline 'Boris is Bonked Out'. Since then 'bonk' had had more citations than any other word. Collins say their reason for including 'bonk' was that a dictionary reflects social change as effectively as a National Census. In that case, they must be bonkers!

Eating out

Brian O'Hanlon

Some cuisines make us run away at the mere mention of them, even in these days of the ethnic restaurants. We are still innately conservative in our eating and drinking habits. English food we know, French is highly acceptable, Italian understood, and Indian OK. But say 'Arabic', or 'Ethiopian', and the average reaction is one of instant recoil — rather like recommending a rest cure on the Gaza Strip. Let us take, this month, two of the ethnic cooking styles which are not really acceptable yet because most people could not bring themselves to try them. Ethiopia has two restaurants in London. **The Red Sea,** at *51 Kilburn High Road, NW6, (Tel: 01-624 5289),* and the long-winded **Ethiopia In The Year 2000: The Blue Nile,** at *1 Woodfield Place,* off Harrow Road, *W9 (Tel: 01-286 5129).*

Taking the last first, we meet Christopher Livingstone, an Ethiopia freak, married to a very attractive lady from there. He is a photographer with an artistic eye who writes the menu with a wry humour. 'If doubt and confusion reign may we suggest a set meal for two? Baked Sweet Potato, or *Azifa*, the chef's choice, followed by coconut sorbet, Ethiopian coffee and dates, and the bill.' The *Azifa* are puréed lentils with lemon, the baked potato comes covered with a tasty ochre biscuity-coloured goo, but in this brief summation let me give you two thoughts: *Ingera*, and *Tibs*. *Ingera* (In-jeera) is sourdough bread which you use to swoop and scoop the *Tibs*, a monster concoction of lean, marinated beef chunks in red wine, rosemary, and *berbere* (burberry) sauce, sautéed in peppers, onions and fresh ginger. It is amazingly delicious and utterly unlike aught you have tasted before. It arrives in a round, large tray, brimming with sliced tomatoes, lettuce, and onions. Mr and Mrs Livingstone's restaurant brims with native artefacts. Tables made of basketwork with removable tops, grass baskets, ideal for holding fruit, and various things for sale. Those include an Abyssinian coffee pot with incense burner and cups (from an archeological dig) for £12. It's open in the evenings only. Meals are priced for two people from a give-away price of £6.50, and there are plenty more of Mr Livingstone's musing in the *Kitfo Crack Crucial Combi*, seasoned spiced beef tartare, plus a jug of strong 'Cruicial Brew', fresh sorbet, and free cab fare home. But not if you live outside London!

The Red Sea has been with us slightly longer. It was opened in November 1986 by Mesfen Maslo with the tagline, 'Food From The Horn of Africa' and with the menu printed in Tigrigni and Amharic, with English explanatory notations. Like the other Ethiopian restaurant, there is a divide between vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes, and they spell it *Engera* here. *Shiro* are mildly spiced ground chickpeas, and *Kek* (also called *Temtimo*) are mildly spiced lentils with split peas. Then there's *Fata*, delightfully delicious bread cubes soaked in spiced tomato sauce; *Kimcha,* cracked barley, and *Bebainetu,* a combination of any four meat dishes for £6. Lamb and chicken casseroles taste so much different with Ethiopian spice treatment, curdled in the mouth with *Engera* or *Ingera*, and you really ought to try a glass of the honeyed wine, the *Miyes*, at £1 which goes down well with this cuisine. A selective 13 meat, seven vegetable dish menu; a smart although somewhat spartan room with the proprietor personally presiding, and, yes, they do have hot towels or fingerbowls. Choose!

The biggest misconception about ethnic eating concerns so-called 'Arab' cuisine. It doesn't exist. It is Lebanese, sheep's eyes and all, which forms the basis of not only Arabia but the Levant, bringing into its maw Turkey and Greece. If you have doubts, then simply pick up a menu from any Arab restaurant and read for yourself. Meat is mostly lamb, with plenty of lentils, chickpeas, *taramosalata, houmous,* and charcoal-grilled steaks, cutlets, much kebabbing, and tasty pastries to finish. I had an enjoyable evening at Ammar Wafaie's **Al Sultan** Lebanese restaurant at *52 Hertford St, Shepherd Market, Mayfair, W1 (Tel: 01-408 1155).* Enjoyable, because it has both class and quality, and the waiters are black-tied, suited and extremely efficient. The menu rightly avoided the word *Meze*, which has become overscored with so much Greek Tavernary, Turkish Doner Kebab houses, and so-called 'Arab' food in London's nightclubs. There are 16 cold Lebanese hors d'oeuvres and 20 hot ones. The choice is clear. *Meze*, by any other name, namely taking several Lebanese starters (three at most), and then have something from the main section. Another point. *Kofte*, minced meat balls in Indian restaurants, is *Kafte* in the Lebanese, only there mincing is usually on skewer and kebabbed. I had an unexpectedly glorious, enjoyable dinner of *Falafal*, ringlets of chickpeas with broad beans, deep fried in spices — and a jug of cream to put over them; *Lebneh*, deliciously tasting, well presented Lebanese cream cheese in a deep bowl, and *Bastorma*, the father of Cypriot *Basta*. Whereas the latter is pork, the Lebanese original version is thinly sliced spiced beef. With all this came wads of fresh *pitta* bread. I finished with one of the *Kafte's* — there are five from which to choose. The *Khashkhash*, £5-worth of four de-skewered pieces of lamb, with paisley, garlic, and tomato puree.

'Do you have anything with a little more privacy?'

Prices may have altered since these restaurants were reviewed. Please enquire with the establishments if you are in any doubt.

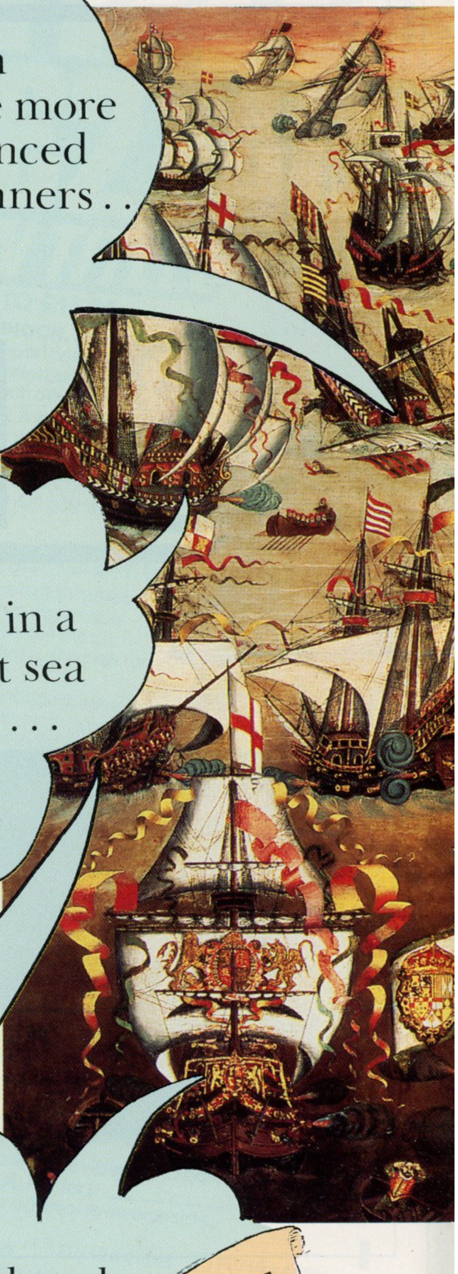
THE Armada

and how it sailed into a large patch of myth

Every schoolboy knows that the English routed the Spanish Fleet in 1588. And every schoolboy would largely be wrong (see the ten popular misconceptions shown here). Now, 400 years later, Edwyn Gray reconstructs exactly what did happen when an unwieldy army, without benefit of weather reports, ventured unwisely into England's tricky coastal waters.

In the course of the 400 years that have passed since it first set sail from Lisbon on May 29, 1588 the Spanish Armada, and its subsequent defeat, have spawned more myths and legends than any other sea battle in history.

To begin with, despite its name, it was by no means entirely Spanish in origin, for Philip II's fearsome fleet included vessels from Portugal, Italy, Venice, Naples and the Levant. And the



The English were more experienced gunners . . .

WRONG
The Queen stopped gunnery practice. She thought it a waste of ammunition

It ended in a great sea battle . . .

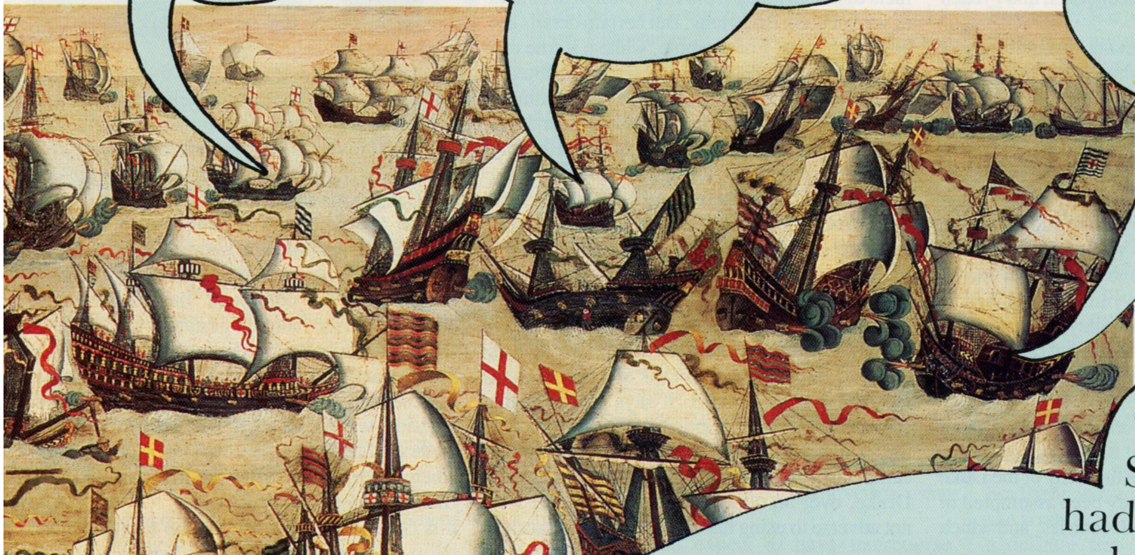
WRONG
It was five separate running fights over several successive days

At least we can agree when it was . . .

WRONG
The English and the Spaniards had separate calendars. Our Thursday July 28 was their Sunday August 7

Drake displayed selfless leadership . . .

WRONG
Dousing his night lights to prevent the others following, he took a disabled Spanish ship as his own prize



The Armada was Spanish . . .

WRONG
The Armada included ships from Portugal, Italy, Venice and the Levant

It was a great fleet of galleons . . .

WRONG
There were only 20 galleons out of 130 ships

The English fleet was heavily outnumbered . . .

WRONG
The English mustered 197 ships to the Spaniards' 130

The Spaniards had the bigger ships . . .

WRONG
The biggest ship was the English *Triumph* captained by Sir Martin Frobisher

Drake fought in the 'Golden Hind' . . .

WRONG
He captained the *Revenge*

The English were led by Sir Francis Drake . . .

WRONG
The commander was Lord Howard of Effingham

crews manning the Armada were even more cosmopolitan. Seamen from Spain and Portugal naturally predominated but there was also a fair sprinkling of sailors from various Italian states, including the Kingdom of Naples, together with Dutch mariners, German artillerists, and French matelots.

More surprisingly the Armada also embraced a significant number of Irishmen and Scotsmen, and even a handful of renegade English adventurers anxious, for both religious and private reasons, to dethrone the Protestant Queen Elizabeth. If the nationalities of the wretched galley slaves, straining at their heavy oars in a sweat of agonised despair, are brought into the reckoning, contemporary records confirm that there was also at least one Welshman in the Spanish fleet — David Gwynn who, chained to the sweeps of a Portuguese galley, miraculously escaped with his life when the vessel ran aground on the coast of Brittany before the battle had even begun.

Although the Armada is often described as an invasion fleet, this was not its original purpose. The main assault force was the army of the Duke of Parma, which had already been assembled in the Spanish-occupied Low Countries, and which it was intended to transport to England in a vast array of flat-bottomed boats. In modern combat jargon, the Armada was a fire-fight and close-escort Task Force — although it also incorporated a fleet train of storeships for logistical support, whose prime duty was to gain control of the Narrow Seas so that Parma's troops could be shuttled safely from the Netherlands to England without interference from the Royal Navy. Its tactical function was similar to that of Goering's *Luftwaffe* in 1940, which was required to gain air superiority over the RAF so that Operation Sea Lion could be launched. The ultimate result, as it happened, was the same in both instances.

After 400 years it is often difficult to separate the facts of the Armada from the fictional accounts of school book historians. But certain details are beyond dispute. For example, while it is true that England's Lord High Admiral was undoubtedly a lord — Lord Charles Howard of Effingham, to be precise — he was scarcely an admiral, and was certainly not a professional seaman. He only enjoyed the rank of the Queen's senior flag officer by virtue of hereditary entitlement, and was already the ninth member of his noble family to hold the appointment. By contrast, England's premier naval commander, Sir Francis Drake, who had circumnavigated the world some 11 years earlier, and who had annexed the barren coast of California in the name of the Queen, was required to relinquish his rank and serve under Howard as vice admiral. It says much for the commonsense and patriotism of the two men that they worked together amicably throughout the campaign, although it must be admitted that Drake, ever an opportunist entrepreneur, was not adverse to using his unsurpassed seamanship to outsmart the Admiral and gain the richest prize when the chance presented itself!

But if England's supreme commander knew little of the sea, his Spanish opponent knew even less. For despite his high-sounding title of *Captain of the Ocean*, the Duke of Medina Sidonia was neither a soldier nor a sailor. And he only obtained the appointment because, as a cousin of the Spanish king, he ranked sufficiently high in the nobility to command the respect and obedience of the haughty grandees who were to serve under him. As an administrator, rather than a man of action, he was forced to consult with his professional colleagues whenever a command decision was needed. It was hardly the best method of leading a fleet into battle, especially when facing adversaries such as Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Hawkyns.

It is commonly believed that the English ships

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Armada

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the largest vessel to take part in the fighting. And modern research has established that the English ships were both more heavily armed and faster than their Spanish contemporaries — qualities that enabled them to engage in long-range bombardment tactics, and to avoid close action, which might lead to grappling, boarding, and capture. Such tactics called for seamanship of the highest order. And that was something which Drake and his countrymen had in plenty.

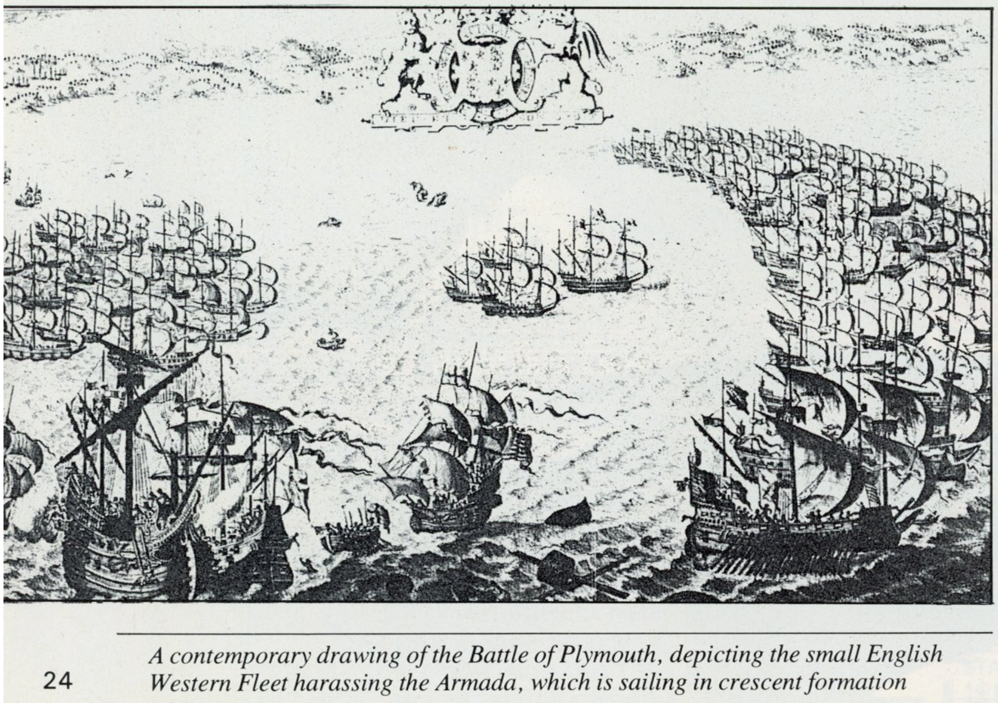
Contrary to the impression given by most history books, the defeat of the Armada was not the result of a single gigantic battle. There were a total of five separate and distinguishable actions — Plymouth, Portland, Isle of Wight, Calais and Gravelines — plus numerous skirmishes and a prolonged chase with the English ships snapping at the heels of the Spaniards like ferocious terriers hounding their prey to the kill. It is, in fact, listed in the *Guinness Book of Sea Warfare* as the most prolonged sea battle ever recorded. But the actual period of continuous fighting — and even then there were long intervals when little was happening — only lasted from July 31 to August 8, and this duration was handsomely exceeded in a number of convoy actions during World War Two.

Finally, and just to add to the difficulties of understanding the various and often contradictory accounts of the battle, both sides used different calendars — the English system, originally introduced by Julius Caeser, being some ten days in arrears of the Spanish 'New Style' reckoning. Thus Tuesday, July 24 in England was Tuesday, August 2 in Spain. As we ultimately adopted the new-style Gregorian calendar in 1751, by which time the discrepancy had increased to 11 days, all dates quoted are based on the Spanish system of calculation.

'The Enterprise of England', as the Armada operation was known in Spain, was triggered by the execution of Mary Queen of Scots in February 1587. Her death at the hands of Queen Elizabeth gave the Spanish King, Philip II, a valid excuse for claiming succession to the English throne, both on religious grounds and on the basis of his marriage to Mary Tudor — his wife having bequeathed him the kingdom in her Will. It was also an opportunity to extend his empire, which already covered more than half of the known world, even further. The organisation was placed in the capable hands of the Marquis of Santa Cruz, an experienced admiral who had helped to defeat the Turks at Lepanto in 1571, and who planned to create a fleet of 550 ships and a force of 100,000 men for the purpose. Had he managed to achieve his production targets, there is little doubt that England would have fallen and the course of history dramatically changed.

But two events prevented the ambitious plan from succeeding. Firstly Drake's pre-emptive strike in 1587, against Cadiz where the Armada was being assembled, seriously disrupted the building programme, and made it impossible for the Spaniards to achieve their target of 550 vessels. And, secondly, the unexpected death of Santa Cruz in February 1588 left the Armada without an experienced and battle-hardend leader. Despite his personal courage and dedication, the new Supreme Commander, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, was a poor substitute.

England also faced problems. The Queen's advisers pointed out the impossibility of raising a land army of sufficient strength to counter a Spanish invasion, and the general consensus of opinion favoured meeting and defeating the enemy at sea — the bottom line of British naval policy even to this day. But Elizabeth, as usual, remained indecisive and was as much concerned with husbanding her money as she was with the build-up of the fleet which the country desperately needed if it was to ward off the Spanish threat. Her hopes for a peaceful solution were understandable for she had more at stake than her courtiers. If Philip gained a victory, there was no doubt that the Queen would lose her head.



A contemporary drawing of the Battle of Plymouth, depicting the small English Western Fleet harassing the Armada, which is sailing in crescent formation

Life in the Elizabethan Navy was horrific by modern standards. Victuals were in permanent short supply, thanks to corruption in high places, and even Drake was forced to complain about the chronic shortage of ammunition. Scurvy and fever were rampant on long voyages, and living conditions defied description. The standard ration scale was a pound of biscuit, a gallon of beer, and a pound of meat per man for four days a week, with cheese and dried fish on the remaining three. And this had to come from an allowance of just five pence (2p) per week. The meat was hard and scarcely edible, the biscuit was alive with weevils, and the beer was sour. Yet, surprisingly, despite their lack of hygiene, the Elizabethans made some important medical discoveries. They found, for example, that citrus fruit prevented scurvy and, in 1572, an observant merchant ship captain noted a connection between mosquito bites and malaria. Unfortunately neither finding survived much beyond the end of the century and it was many years before the medical profession erradicated scurvy and malaria from His Majesty's ships.

Fire was, perhaps, the greatest danger to face a wooden-hulled ship. And the cramped quarters, plus the use of naked flames, did much to increase the risk of sudden disaster. The Elizabethan attitude to personal hygiene was reflected in their fire precautions. Captains were instructed to chain two hogsheads, or casks, to the side of the ship for 'the soldiers and mariners to piss into that they may always be full of urine to quench the fire with . . . and two to three pieces of old sail ready to wet in the piss.'

Punishments were sadistically severe. A mariner who struck an officer could have his hand nailed to the mast, while a sailor found guilty of murder was tied to the corpse of his victim and thrown overboard. Anyone habitually sleeping on watch was to 'be hanged on the bowspirt end of the ship in a basket with a can of beer, a loaf of bread, and a sharp knife, and . . . to hang there till he starve, or cut himself into the sea.' Blasphemy and swearing were punished with equal severity. Miscreants had a marlin spike 'clapt into their mouths and tied behind their head and (were then made) to stand a whole hour till their mouths be bloody.' As a contemporary writer noted, it was 'and excellent cure for swearers.'

Combat instructions demonstrated a cold-blooded realism that would have done credit to Rambo. If unsuitable for taking as a prize, captured ships were inevitably sunk and the victorious captains were warned: 'First take heed that your own men be retired. Then take the captain with certain of his best men with him (as prisoners). The rest commit . . . to the bottom of the sea, for else they will turn upon you to your confusion'. The reason for taking the captain and officers off the doomed ship and holding them prisoner had nothing to do with chivalry or respect for human life. It was simply that, as men of substance, they could be ransomed at a later date, and the money added to the prize funds for subsequent distribution.

With a seaman earning a mere £6.50 per *year*, and even a ship's master receiving little more than 50p per week in wages, prize money and loot formed an important part of a sailor's income. Nevertheless, the Queen claimed a fifth share of *all* prizes, while the admiral received a further tenth before the crew got their cut. Even then their eventual share amounted to only a third

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of the remainder, with a disproportionate amount going to the captain and his officers. In the circumstances it is not surprising that men were prepared to pay bribes of up to £1 — more than 1,000 pounds in modern money — to avoid being pressed into service.

The Spanish seamen enjoyed a similarly miserable existence although, in some respects, they fared even worse than their English counterparts. For the soldiers carried on board the Armada ships were considered to be socially superior to the mariners and they occupied the crew's quarters and had the lion's share of the food at the expense of their sea-faring cousins. It is an interesting commentary on life in the 16th century that Medina Sidonia was forced to issue the following Special Order before the Armada had even set sail: 'As it is an evident inconvenience, as well as an offence to God, that public or other women should be permitted to accompany an Armada, I order that none shall be taken aboard.' But the harlots circumvented the order by hiring their own ships, which hopefully trailed behind the fleet. In the event they did little business. And most of these floating brothels were subsequently driven ashore on the French coast by gale-force winds, and wrecked.

But women or no women, the Armada finally set sail from Lisbon on May 29, only to be driven into Corunna nearly three weeks later by bad weather. It was hardly an auspicious start for the Enterprise of England. Chaos and confusion reigned supreme in the Spanish camp. Many ships were heavily damaged and needed urgent repairs, while the numerous landsmen aboard, having experienced the venom of the sea for the first time, viewed the future with considerable trepidation. To make matters worse, more than a third of the great fleet failed to make harbour and were feared lost. Fortunately for Medina Sidonia's peace of mind they were found lying off the Scilly Isles and had to be summoned back to Spain to rejoin their comrades.

Meanwhile the English were preparing their defences. Lord Henry Seymour, with 35 ships under his command, was busily patrolling the Narrow Seas, and keeping watch on Parma's activities in the Low Countries, while Howard and Drake, with 94 ships, waited at Plymouth. In fact, during May, Drake had taken a large squadron into the Bay of Biscay in search of the enemy, but had been forced to return empty-handed. It was soon after this venture that he complained to the Queen about the shortage of powder and shot for his guns. Like Queen Victoria, she was not amused. And when, a few days later, a cannon misfired and killed two men during exercises, she tartly ordered Sir Francis to stop all further gunnery practice because it wasted ammunition — a rebuke that neatly passed any blame for shortages from the Crown to the Vice Admiral. It is a trick which the Treasury still uses today.

As part of a propaganda drive to inflame feelings against Spain, officially-inspired rumours were cleverly circulated throughout the country. Preachers warned congregations from their pulpits that 'in the Spanish ships were many instruments of torture with which to afflict the English people'. And an Italian merchant living in London reported that the authorities 'made the people believe that the Spaniards were bringing a shipload of halters in the Armada to hang all the Englishmen, and another shipload of scourges to whip women, with 3,000 or 4,000 wet nurses to suckle the (orphaned) children. It was said that all children between the ages of seven and 12 would be branded in the face so that they might always be known.' Not surprisingly, in the face of such scurrilous stories, English hatred of the Spanish rose to fever-pitch. And there was no lack of eager volunteers when Raleigh and Sir Richard Grenville set about organising the Channel coast defences.

But, as already noted, Medina Sidonia had no plans to make any landings. In fact his orders from the King were quite specific: 'You will fight only if you cannot otherwise make secure the passage across to England of the Duke of Parma.' But another factor was weighing heavily on Philip's mind. The Pope, Sixtus V, had agreed to pay one million golden ducats to the Royal Treasury the moment Spanish troops landed on English soil. And with his eyes firmly fixed on this tempting inducement, Philip had added: 'If the Duke of Parma should not be able to cross to England, nor you for that reason to meet him, then you will see whether you are able to capture the Isle of Wight . . .' In his greed Philip apparently overlooked that this alternative scenario would probably mean the Armada beating back down-Channel *against* the prevailing winds, and into the waiting hands of the English fleet.

The Armada finally sailed from Corunna on July 23 and favourable winds brought the Spaniards to the mouth of the Channel by the morning of the 26th. Here, however, they were becalmed in thick fog for several hours until a fierce storm developed during the afternoon — the rising winds forcing the lightly built galleys to turn back and wrecking at least two on the rocks of the French coast near Ushant. The 768-ton galleon *Santa Ana* was also forced to leave the formation and run for shelter, while the heavy seas quickly scattered the floating brothels at the rear.

Sidonia had formed his ships into a vast crescent-shaped formation with his own squadron in the van, the storeships behind him, and the great galleasses and carracks of the Levant Squadron on the northern, or left, wing. The great mass of ships was sighted at four pm that same day off the Lizard by Captain Thomas Flemying of the bark *Golden Hind*, who promptly clapped on all sail and hastened eastwards towards Plymouth to warn the waiting English admirals. Almost at once the first of the beacons on the Cornish cliffs burst into flames, and a rapid chain of fires carried the warning of the Armada's arrival across southern England to London.

Once again it is necessary to separate fact from legend. For, despite the romanticised picture of the bowling green with its short-clipped grass and leisurely players, it is far more probable that Drake and Howard were roistering in the bowling alley of a seafront tavern when Flemying arrived to report the sighting. In fact, the story of Drake and the game of bowls is of Spanish origin, and first appeared in print in a pamphlet published in 1624 — some 34 years *after* the event. But, whatever the truth of the episode, there is probably some basis of fact in Drake's reputed, 'We have time to finish the game and beast the Spaniards too,' for the English fleet was inside Plymouth's almost landlocked harbour, and the vessels had to be warped out of the anchorage on the ebb-tide in order to get them into deep water. It proved to be a touch-and-go affair, and Howard's ships were within a hair's breadth of being bottled up in the Hamoaze. For, although 67 vessels managed to get out, a further 40 had to be left behind.

Drake's squadron was safely clear by the late afternoon of Saturday, July 30 and he rapidly beat off windward to obtain the weather gauge - that is to say, he brought his ships into a position astern of the Armada so that he had the wind behind him and could dictate the course of the forthcoming battle. The ships under Howard's direct command passed in front of the enemy fleet during the night, before swinging west to join Drake's forces astern. And the Spanish admiral's first intimation that the English were on his tail came at two am on Sunday morning, when a 'forest of sails' was observed in the moonlight.

The battle began at nine am with Howard

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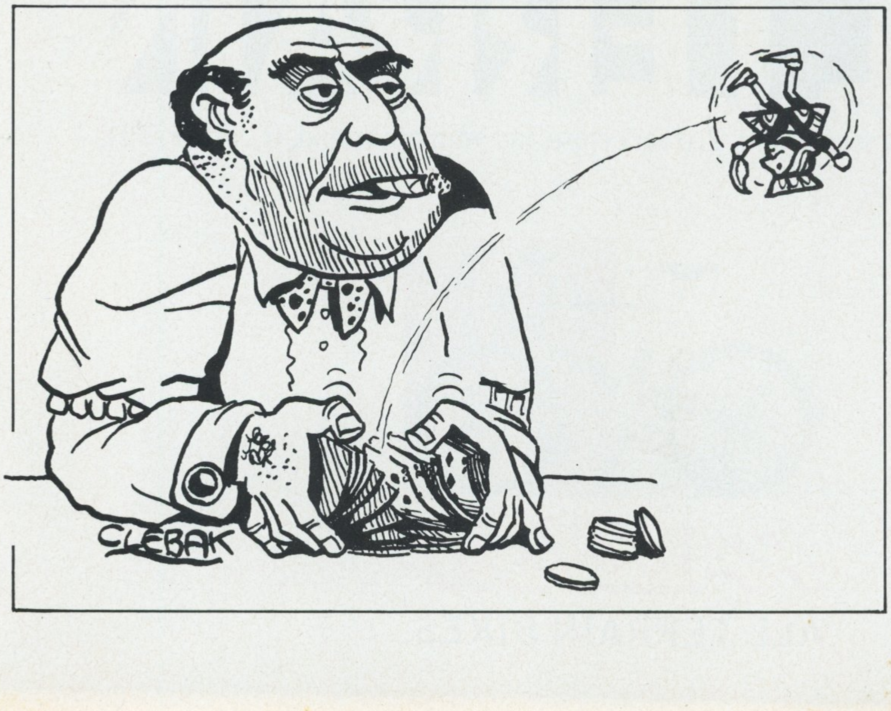

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attacking the northern wing of the enemy formation, while Drake, Hawkyns, and Frobisher engaged Admiral Juan Martinez de Recalde's Biscay Squadron on the right. The Armada was divided into eight squadrons in all, and Recalde was a veteran, respected by both Spanish and English. Sidonia, despite his careful precautions, had been caught on the wrong foot, for his most powerful fighting ships were in the van, where they were helplessly unable to protect the Armada's flanks and rear from the enemy. But, with grim determination, he maintained the tight defensive formation and even ordered some of his ships to shorten sail in order to keep the fleet together. The superiority of the English guns, the better sailing qualities of the ships, and their refusal to come to close quarters and thus deprive their enemy of his greatest advantage, quickly gave Howard's fleet the upper hand and, even in this first indecisive encounter, Spanish morale was seriously undermined.

Shortly before sunset the galleon *San Salvador* caught fire, following a massive explosion — a victim, not of English cannons, but an act of sabotage by a member of its own crew, a German gunner who threw a flaming torch into a barrel of gunpowder following a dispute with one of the vessel's Spanish officers. In addition to this disaster, the *Nuestra Senora del Rosario*, flagship of the Andalusian Squadron and one of the richest treasure ships in the Armada, was seriously damaged and dismasted after a collision. And, as dusk settled over the field of battle, Howard ordered Drake to shadow the Armada while the rest of the English fleet formed up and followed his stern lantern.

But old habits die hard. Drake had spent too long as a privateer to pass up an opportunity when he saw one. Without a word to anyone, he extinguished his lantern and turned seawards under cover of darkness — excusing his strange behaviour by claiming that he had sighted Spanish ships trying to get to windward of Howard's force. Dawn found Drake's *Revenge* alongside the crippled flagship and within an hour he had accepted the surrender of one of the Armada's most senior admirals, Don Pedro de Valdes — thus gaining for his private profit the most valuable prize to be captured during the entire campaign. The burning *San Salvador* was also seized later in the morning, after being abandoned by its crew.

Drake's greed-inspired subterfuge nearly brought disaster to the remainder of the English fleet however. For, unaware that *Revenge's* lantern had been extinguished, Howard's ships followed an unidentified light which proved, the next morning, to be on the poop of a Spanish ship. Thus, as dawn broke, the English ships found themselves within cannon range of the Armada's galleons, and the day was only saved because Medina Sidonia refused to send his oared galleasses in pursuit of the disorganised English fleet.

'This is turning Polly off. Polly wants a cracker!'

The Armada continued moving slowly up-Channel throughout Monday, with Howard's ships following closely behind, but a change in wind direction early on Tuesday morning, when the Spanish were off Portland, gave them the advantage of the weather gauge. England's Lord High Admiral, beating against the stiffening breeze, made several attempts to outflank the enemy, both inshore and seawards to the south, but failed on each occasion. Meanwhile Frobisher, anchored under the lee of Portland and with his windward flank safely guarded by a fierce tidal race, was busy keeping the galleasses at bay. Howard tried to assist him, but, with the advantage of the wind, Sidonia mirrored his movements and it took an attack on Recalde's flagship, *San Juan*, to relieve the pressure on Frobisher's hard-pressed *Triumph*. The Spanish ships turned away to help their comrade, leaving Sidonia's *San Martin* alone and unsupported to challenge Howard's squadron. But, despite furling his topsails in a ruse to draw *Ark Royal* alongside, the Spanish admiral failed to tempt Howard into abandoning his stand-off tactics. The English squadron kept its distance and exchanged broadsides with the enemy flagship for more than an hour without any appreciable results. Thus, despite the Armada having the advantage of the weather guage, and Howard's assault on the *San Martin*, the battle ended indecisively and the Spanish fleet continued to drift slowly up-Channel with its colourful banners drooping listlessly in the barely perceptible breeze and its sails hanging limp.

The next action, which took place off the Isle of Wight on Thursday, August 4, demonstrated England's superiority in the art of seamanship. And it was, indeed, more of a struggle against the vagaries of the sea than a battle against the human enemy. The powerful tides and currents that sweep around the island are notoriously fierce and, with years of experience in sailing these treacherous waters, the English captains were in a position to exploit their hard-earned knowledge. Not that everything went their way. Powder and shot were already in short supply. And, at times, the wind fell away, leaving the ships becalmed — conditions that gave the Spanish, with their oared galleasses, a distinct tactical advantage.

Frobisher, a man with little fighting experience but a wide knowledge of ship-handling in restricted waters, once again led the inshore squadron while Drake's heavily-gunned vessels held the seaward flank. The ensuing battle, which lasted from five am to ten am, was fiercely fought by both sides, and at times the ranges shortened to a suicidal 100 yards. The lack of wind forced both Howard and Hawkyns, in command of the centre squadrons, to tow their ships into action and the unfortunate seamen straining at the oars in open boats came under heavy musket fire from the Spanish soldiers high up in the towering stern castles of the opposing vessels. But, in response to an unseen signal, the English ships suddenly swung boardside-on to the enemy and opened a murderous cannonade. A rising wind — apparently anticipated by the weather-wise English — added to the distress of the Spanish, and Sidonia was forced to fall back so that he could cover the retreat of the battered galleasses.

The battle now developed into a frantic race to

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Left to right: Lord Charles Howard, Earl of Effingham — Lord High Admiral of the English fleet, but not a professional seaman. Sir John Hawkyns — his flagship was the Victory. *Sir Martin Frobisher — an explorer and fine sailor but a man of little fighting experience. Sir Francis Drake — England's premier naval commander, he was required to relinquish his rank and serve under Howard.*

opposing the Armada were inferior in both size and numbers. But this is another of the many myths that have developed over the centuries. Although the authorities are not agreed on the precise numbers involved, it is generally accepted that the Armada itself comprised some 130 ships. However, of these only 20 were rated as galleons — that is to say as purpose-built warships with big guns — while a further 34 were classed as 'large' ships. This latter classification is usually taken to mean ocean-going merchantmen modified to carry additional cannons. The remainder of the fleet, apart from four oar-driven galleys and four galleasses (a heavier-armed type of galley) were either ungainly storeships, known as 'hulks', or pinnaces — the latter often weighing no more than 20 tons. Of equal significance, out of the 29,458 men who sailed with the Armada, no fewer than 19,000 were soldiers, whose primary task was to board and capture any enemy ships that could be grappled alongside. For, although the wooden sailing vessels of the period could be disabled by the solid shot fired by contemporary smooth-bore cannons, they were virtually unsinkable. Thus the only way in which to deprive the enemy of their use was to seize them as prizes.

In terms of sheer numbers, the English fleet was actually *larger* than that of the Spanish and totalled 197 vessels, although only 34 of these were described as Queen's Ships. But, as the English force had to cover both ends of the Channel simultaneously, it never had the opportunity to concentrate its full strength and meet the enemy on anything like equal terms.

The relative sizes of the vessels engaged in the Armada battles has also been a source of considerable confusion. For example, although in general terms the English ships were smaller than those of Medina Sidonia, the *Triumph*, commanded by Martin Frobisher, was actually

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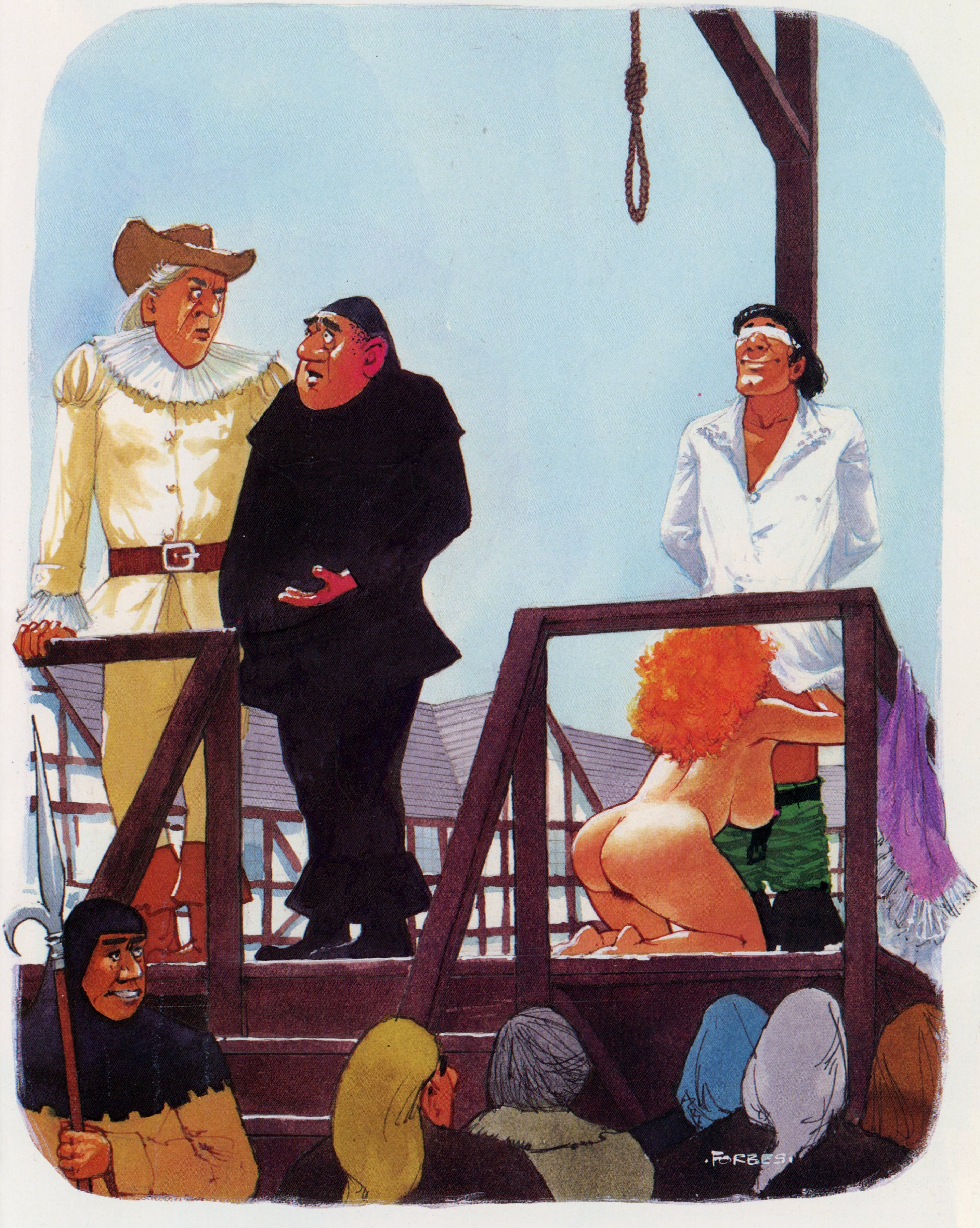

'His last wish was that all England remember why he was known as Dick Turpin . . .

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push the Armada beyond Bembridge — their last possible anchorage if they were to get their troops safely ashore — before the tide turned in their favour. And Frobisher's brilliant exploitation to the complex tidal patterns along the coast ensured that the English fleet would achieve its objective. Meanwhile Drake and Hawkyns, well out into the Channel and to the south of the main action, were gradually 'rolling up' the right wing of the Spanish formation, compelling the enemy ships to bunch together like a traffic snarl-up in the wake of a motorway lane closure. It could have ended in disaster, but at the very last moment Sidonia, realising that the Armada was being forced onto the graveyard of the shoals and rocks that made up The Owers, turned the fleet seaward and led it into deeper water. The sudden alteration of course effectively destroyed Spain's last chance of landing troops in southern England. With the prize snatched from his grasping fingers, Sidonia reluctantly continued up-Channel to effect a junction with Parma's land forces, in accordance with Santa Cruz's original plan. He was not a happy man.

A freshening WSW wind carried the Armada into the Calais Roads and on the afternoon of Saturday, August 6 the Spanish admiral suddenly ordered his ships to drop anchor close to the French shore. He hoped that the English ships would be caught unawares and swept past him to leeward.

But Howard was not deceived by this unorthodox manoeuvre and, responding with decisive swiftness, he brought his own fleet to a halt a mile or so to windward — a position that gave him a dominating advantage. The unfortunate Sidonia now found himself dangerously trapped downwind of the enemy, with his freedom of movement restricted by the threatening proximity of a hostile lee shore.

To make matters worse, the Duke also learned that Parma had insufficient barges with which to transport his army to England, and that the shoaling waters along the Flemish coast were too shallow for the Duke's own deep-draught galleons to cross. In addition, swarms of Dutch rebels in fast and well-armed fly boats meant that Parma did not dare to rendezvous with Sidonia's forces in the Thames estuary without support from the Armada's guns. It was a dilemma that seemed to defy solution. Until the English came up with the answer.

'You might have told me I got the wrong flat and the film director lives one floor up.'

Howard's force was now joined by Lord Henry Seymour's squadron of 35 ships, which had been zealously guarding the Straits for the past few weks, and the two opposing fleets were now approximately equal in terms of numerical strength. But the English possessed a secret weapon. It proved to be a battle winner.

Acting on the advice of the Italian engineer Federico Giambelli, the Lord High Admiral converted eight of his oldest vessels into fire-ships — literally floating bombs. The boats were filled with gunpowder, pitch, brimstone, and 'other fiery and combustible matter', and their guns were charged with powder and shot. Early on Sunday morning, when both wind and tide were favourable, the fire-ships were harnessed together in pairs and loosed on the hapless Spaniards. Detonated by clockwork-controlled flintlocks, they caused unimaginable chaos and confusion as the panic-stricken enemy cut their anchor cables and fled seawards. 'They came towards us all in flames,' wrote a survivor after the event, 'burning furiously in the bows, with mainsails and foresails set, and the rudders lashed'. The galleass flagship *San Lorenzo* was rammed first by the *Girona* and then by the *Rata Encoronade* as the once-proud Armada dissolved in disorder, and, with her rudder smashed, she drifted inshore until she ran aground close to the harbour. She was later boarded and captured by the English.

By this time, the bulk of Sidonia's fleet was flying pell-mell before the wind and had lost all semblance of shape or cohesion. But the Duke courageously ordered his own flagship, *San Martin*, to heave-to and, supported by four other galleons, he tried to hold the entire English fleet at bay while the remainder of the Armada tacked from leeward and tried to reform. It proved to be a battle to the death. The Spaniards were almost without ammunition and they stood little chance as the nimbler English ships closed to point-blank range with broadsides blazing. Howard's attack concentrated on individual and isolated vessels, for the south-westerly winds prevented the bulk of the Spanish fleet from supporting their hard-pressed comrades. Inch by inch the English onslaught drove the helpless Spaniards closer and closer to the shoals and sandbanks of the Flemish coast.

The great galleon *San Felipe* was smashed into a mastless and useless wreck by Howard's artillery fire, and was left rolling sluggishly with 200 men dead and her decks literally running with blood. The *San Mateo* and *Maria Juan* were in a similarly parlous strait, as were several of the smaller boats.

Historians are not agreed on the number of vessels lost, but Howard claimed the destruction of nine ships in the nine days that had elapsed since the first battle off Plymouth. And this is probably as accurate a figure as any other.

Although a providential change in wind direction saved the Spanish fleet from the shallows, it brought Sidonia no relief from danger, for the Armada was now being blown out into the North Sea, and any hope of returning down-Channel had gone. Some English ships, including Drake's squadron, were still in pursuit, and spasmodic gunfire continued at intervals. But, with little powder and shot left, Sidonia could not afford to stand and fight. He pushed northwards with the intention of rounding Scotland and escaping back to Spain down the west coast of Ireland.

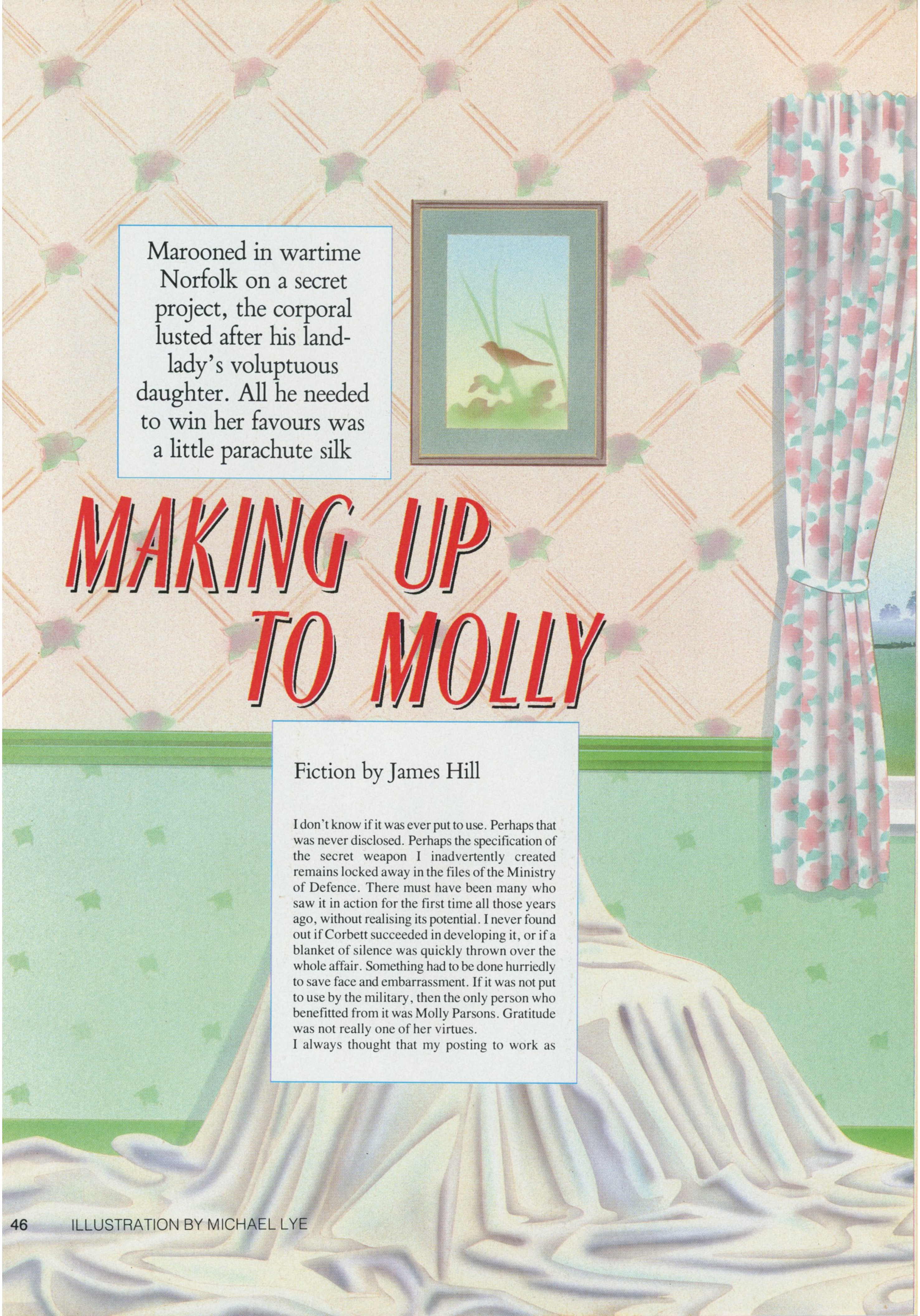
It was a daunting prospect, and the Duke did not relish the idea of battling south in the teeth of Atlantic gales, with an inhospitable lee shore on his port side. But there was no realistic alternative. In addition, food and fresh drinking water were in short supply, and the spectre of starvation and disease loomed large in his mind. But he held on with grim determination, and, by the time he reached the Firth of Forth, the last of his pursuers had finally dropped out of the chase. At least he now no longer needed to worry about the enemy.

By August 20 the ships of the Armada had rounded the Shetlands and were already digging their blunt bows into the hostile waters of the Atlantic — the cold green seas sweeping over their decks and adding to their misery. The *San Grifon* struck a rock off Fair Isle, but Sidonia dared not, in fact *could* not, stop to render assistance, and her crew had to spend the winter cast away on that bare and desolate island.

The weather worsened rapidly and the hapless Spaniards, weakened by hunger, clung to the masts as the shrieking gales ripped the sails to shreds. In the course of the next 14 days some 19 ships were hurled onto the granite rocks of the Hebrides, or dashed to matchwood on the bleak shores of Ireland. Many crews died in the bloodied surf as they tried to reach land. And of those that survived, an estimated 80 per cent were killed by gangs of wild Irish peasants hungry for loot. The galleass *Girona* went down with all hands near the Giant's Causeway, and the *La Rotta* and *Belanzara* were both lost in the angry seas. The *San Juan*, by superlative seamanship, succeeded in anchoring inside a storm-lashed bay, while her crew went ashore and made armed raids on farmhouses and villages in search of food. But, despite such desperate effort, the records show that two to three men died of hunger and thirst every day on the final leg of the voyage back to Spain.

Nineteen ships are known to have been lost to the Atlantic weather and the razor-sharp rocks of western Scotland and Ireland. A further 35 vanished without trace. Of the 130 ships that had sailed out of Lisbon, 64 never returned, and an estimated 10,000 men died. Philip II accepted the disaster with stoic resignation. 'I sent my ships to fight against the English — not against the winds and waves' was the only excuse he offered. And Sidonia, almost at a loss for words, wrote to the King that 'the troubles and miseries which we have suffered cannot be described to Your Majesty. They have been greater than have ever been seen in any voyage before.' In the circumstances it was almost an understatement.

The defeat of Sidonia's great fleet marks the starting point of Britain's long and ancient naval traditions. And, indeed, *Armada* is the oldest battle honour in the Royal Navy. It seems appropriate that it is borne by many of the ships that make up Britain's front-line defences in 1988 — ships whose names include the aircraft carrier *Ark Royal* and the nuclear submarines *Revenge, Dreadnought, Vanguard* and *Swiftsure*. The Trident missile seems a long way removed from the cannon-royals and demi-culverines of Drake's rakish galleons. But, despite the passage of 400 years, the fighting spirit remains the same.



Marooned in wartime Norfolk on a secret project, the corporal lusted after his landlady's voluptuous daughter. All he needed to win her favours was a little parachute silk

MAKING UP TO MOLLY

Fiction by James Hill

I don't know if it was ever put to use. Perhaps that was never disclosed. Perhaps the specification of the secret weapon I inadvertently created remains locked away in the files of the Ministry of Defence. There must have been many who saw it in action for the first time all those years ago, without realising its potential. I never found out if Corbett succeeded in developing it, or if a blanket of silence was quickly thrown over the whole affair. Something had to be done hurriedly to save face and embarrassment. If it was not put to use by the military, then the only person who benefitted from it was Molly Parsons. Gratitude was not really one of her virtues.

I always thought that my posting to work as

ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL LYE

MAKING UP TO MOLLY

Corbett's personal assistant was an orderly room blunder. He was a boffin — a scientist from Farnborough, and I had to report to a small civilian boatyard in Norfolk where he was working.

He was a tall, lean, shortsighted man with a permanent stoop, which might have been acquired from years spent crouching over a drawing board. His manner was fittingly vague and laconic.

'Who are you?' he asked, staring blankly when I arrived.

I explained and gave him the paperwork which he seemed to have difficulty in deciphering.

'What's your maths like?'

I told him that I had a School Certificate.

'Better than nothing,' he grunted 'Can you make tea?'

I told him that this was within my capabilities. He then indicated a mess of crockery in a corner of the room.

'Well, why don't you brew up, Corporal? Then we'll talk about what you're going to do.'

He went back to his desk, littered with rolled up blueprints, and seemed instantly to forget all about me until I had handed him a mug of tea.

'Have they told you what this is all about?' he asked.

They hadn't. I had been given only the usual, ponderous briefing that the work was highly classified, and I was not to discuss it with anyone.

'Airborne lifeboats,' Corbett explained. 'They're dropped on parachutes to ditched aircrew from a Warwick bomber. They climb in and sail home. That's the idea. Trouble seems to be that the boats hit the water too hard and break up. The parachutes have to be redesigned. Terminal descent velocity should be no more than ten mph.'

He frowned suddenly. 'What's that in feet per second?'

I didn't know whether his data had suddenly escaped him, or whether it was simply a question to test my ability. That 60 mph was equivalent to 88 feet per second was one of the few facts I remembered from physics. I did a swift mental calculation.

'About fourteen point six.'

'Good,' he muttered, and fumbled for pencil and paper to record it. 'Too much time's wasted on damned computation. Help me untangle this, will you?'

This turned out to be a skein of silken cord. When we had managed to unravel it, a section of it had to be taken to another part of the yard where there was a machine for testing its tensile strength.

There were certain basic issues, which escaped Corbett but which troubled me. It was understandable that he was so engrossed in technical problems that he was unable to give time to considering where I was going to sleep and eat. I had to mention this eventually.

'I'm staying at the Marine Hotel,' he told me, 'And one can get lunch at the canteen in the yard.'

The Air Ministry was unlikely to grant me a similar status to Corbett's. I told him that I'd better go to the police and see if they could help me find a civilian billet.

'Do that after lunch.' Corbett said.

He went to eat in the Managing Director's office, but I joined the queue in the canteen. The girl at the serving hatch had blonde hair and scarlet lips, but what caught my immediate attention was that part of her figure which strained the upper regions of her overall, and of which a considerable sector was revealed when she leaned forward, with calculated provocation, across the doughnuts and her large, grey eyes surveyed me with more than casual interest. My eyes slid from the spherical doughnuts to the more subtle convexities of white breasts and became locked there, noticing the bra which supported them and confirmed that there was no dress under the overall.

'What d'you fancy, then?' she asked.

Before I could answer, she giggled and went on, looking me fully in the eye with an overtly salacious leer.

'I know what you'd fancy, but what are you going to have to eat?'

I settled for sausage and chips: the alternative was sausage and mash. I took my meal to a vacant table. A few minutes later she closed the serving-hatch and came to sit down at my table.

'An airman?' she said. 'What are you doing here, then?'

'I'm not supposed to talk about that,' I told her rather stiffly. One of the few compensations of my rather strange work in the Air Force was that it could be veiled in an aura of totally spurious secrecy and glamour.

'Oh, you'll be working with him and those parachutes,' she said.

So much for security.

She took out a packet of American cigarettes and offered me one. When I lit it for her, she leaned towards me and her thigh came in contact with mine, and she did not attempt to shift it away. The overall had parted to reveal bare legs above rounded knees. There was a direct, uncomplicated sexuality about her, beamed at me like headlamps, and I was as hypnotised as a rabbit in the glare.

'Here,' she said. 'You couldn't get hold of one for me could you? They make smashing undies. I'd be ever so grateful if you could do that.'

The way she said this suggested that her gratitude might assume warm and highly desirable dimensions.

'I'll do what I can,' I told her casually, but inwardly resolving that this project would have the highest priority.

'Where are you staying?'

I explained that this had yet to be settled.

'My Mum sometimes has sailors billeted at home. We haven't got one at the moment. She'd put you up.'

She gave me the address, and later that afternoon I moved in with my kit to Mrs Parson's semi-detached house about a mile from the yard.

Mrs Parson was physically a senior version of her daughter. Her appearance and manner gave the impression of a blend of the maternal and the amiably carnal. When I thanked her for accommodating me she dismissed this with a laugh and a wave of her hands.

'Think nothing of it, dear. We all got to do our bit to get rid of old 'Itler. I do what I can to make our boys welcome and happy while they're 'ere. Sort of my personal war effort to provide those little home comforts you all miss.'

The manner in which she told me this seemed to hint that the term 'home comforts' was fully comprehensive. She went on to say that most of her efforts were directed towards the American airmen in the area because — poor lads — they were so far away from their homes and all that they held dear.

The room she placed me in was on the first floor opposite Molly's bedroom. I unpacked in a mood of joyful expectation, hardly believing my luck. All in all I was very contented with what had

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'You wouldn't like one more look, Mrs Brown . . . You seem very certain.'

continued from page 48

MAKING UP TO MOLLY

happened to me. Work with Corbett was unpredictable and wildly varied, ranging from tea making to turning his scribbled sketches into drawings which would be intelligible in a workshop. There were extravagantly theatrical sessions, where I was required to launch small, scale-model parachutes from the top of a crane whilst Corbett timed their descent with a stopwatch.

It was good to be far from the grim, grey depot near Uxbridge, well distanced from the caustic voice of Flight-Sergeant Bullman quoting from the Drill Instructor's Phrasebook: 'Are you in pain, Corporal? You should be — I'm standing on the ends of your hair!'

The inevitable snag was that relations with Molly did not develop as I had hoped and anticipated. She was 'ever so sorry' that she couldn't accept my invitations to go to a pub or a dance, on account of Alvin. He was a sergeant from the American base whom she referred to as her 'steady'. He turned up frequently at the house, visible behind a cloud of cigar smoke as a bulky, well-fed figure usually loaded down with parcels for Molly and her mother. He and Molly would drive off in a jeep which seemed to be his personal property. I couldn't agree that Alvin was in need of 'home comforts'.

What exacerbated growing frustration and resentment was the daily contact I had with Molly in the canteen, and she frequently came to sit by me, as she had on that first day, and invariably she steered conversation round to the subject of parachute fabric.

'I'm doing my best,' I protested. 'It's not going to be easy and I could get into a lot of trouble.'

'You'll find a way,' she encouraged me. 'I mean — if you really want something badly enough, it's worth a little risk, isn't it?'

There was a subtle ambiguity about that statement. What was it that was actually 'wanted' and by whom?

Mrs Parson's husband — Molly's father — was a regular Naval Petty Officer serving on some shore station in the South Pacific, and not expected home for a couple of years. In this regrettable separation, which she sometimes referred to tearfully, she occupied the empty hours of the evening by consoling other members of the Forces suffering similar exile. As my presence in the living room might inhibit intimacy of conversation when her visitors called, I spent a lot of time reading in my room or at a pub.

I would hear Molly return with Alvin, and try to close my mind to the giggling and mock screams on the doorstep before she came in and mounted the stairs. Then there would be humming and singing to the radio, and the sound of her going to the bathroom. Agonisingly, she would sometimes tap on my door and come in, wearing her dressing gown, sit down on the bed, smoke a cigarette and prattle on about her evening with Alvin. Eventually she got back to parachutes. This was something really big in her life, meaning more to her than the nylons which Alvin had given her, exhibited by the exposure of a sleek thigh, which she just left extended for me to gaze on. When I placed a tentative hand on it, she gave a grimace of pleasure.

'Oh, that's nice — but your 'and ain't 'arf cold!' Then she gently but firmly removed my hand, preventing any further exploration of that territory, and walked off.

It was hell.

Apart from all this, there was almost an idyllic, pastoral quality about those weeks at the boatyard. Corbett succeeded in getting a small van and, as he loathed driving, he got me to take him on visits to Beccles or Norwich and I could often go off in it on my own to pick up various pieces of equipment. I was occasionally able to wander off and explore the flat landscape with its ocean of sky, or even hire a dinghy and go sailing on the Broads.

It was not unalloyed pleasure. The burgeoning cumulus clouds which drifted by, the swelling of the sails and their whiteness, inevitably evoked images of Molly's contours and the damned parachute fabric. I came across backwaters concealed by tall reeds and visions of drifting into one of these on a warm afternoon with Molly lying in my arms could not be subdued. I was the victim of unrequited lust and tormented by it.

I asked Corbett if there was the possibility of obtaining a parachute.

'Just a surplus one . . . torn. It doesn't matter. I'd just like to do some experimental work of my own.'

Corbett regarded me with a blank expression and then a grin.

'More likely for underwear for some young woman. Have you any idea how much they cost? Forget it, Corporal. You'll have to find other ways of conducting your . . . experiments.'

Although disappointed, it was pleasant to find a human aspect of Corbett, which I hadn't anticipated.

Late one afternoon he thrust a sheet of paper at me, on which he had scrawled a cabalistic equation with umpteen constants and variables.

'That's it then — that's the formula. You work out the canopy area and get that over to the factory tomorrow morning, and tell them to have a prototype ready by Friday next.'

I protested at this burden of responsibility, but Corbett dismissed it shortly. He had a lofty contempt for what he referred to as 'mere computation'.

'I haven't time to waste on child's arithmetic. I've got to go to Beccles and lay on an aircraft, and there's the assessment team to organise.'

So I went back to my billet and apprehensively got to work with a slide rule. I was worried enough about that on its own without the complication that Molly had had a tiff with Alvin, and came into my room to seek company.

'What you doing, then? It looks ever so complicated. You must be quite clever, really. But they can't expect you to work all hours — you got to have some time off. Of course, if you don't want to take me out for a drink . . . I mean — you're always asking me, aren't you?'

That was that. Arm in arm, we went off to explore the night life of Lowestoft. It was not just the temperature of the crowded dance hall which made me sweat. She was a good dancer, very light on her feet and practised what I once heard a professional dancer refer to as 'firm pelvic contact'. Her body was close to mine: if she was aware of the effect that was having, she didn't display it. She drifted around with half-closed eyes, singing quietly to herself, nuzzling against my ear. Conversation was arid but irrelevant. Molly was a non-verbal communicator.

When we reached home, she opened the door of the living room, but almost immediately closed it quietly. There was just time for me to observe that Mrs Parson was busy. I didn't exactly see her: only a broad khaki back and her arms which were entwined around it as she was providing 'home comforts'.

Molly sniggered and motioned me to go upstairs. We went into my room, and she slid off her coat and dumped herself on the bed.

'That was a smashing evening,' she observed. 'I really enjoyed myself.'

'You know,' she went on with a frown of

turn to page 66

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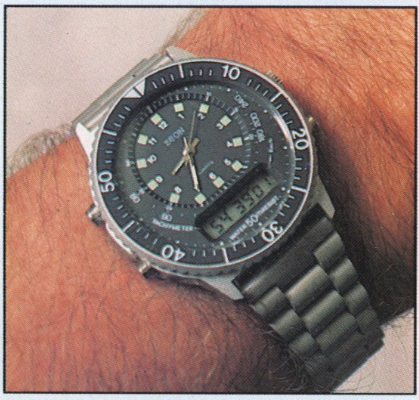

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MAKING UP TO MOLLY

continued from page 50

concentration. 'It's a pity about Alvin. He takes too much for granted and you're much better looking than he is.'

Sensing a territorial advantage, I put my arm round her and kissed her. If I'd wanted to disengage, it would have been difficult. She moaned softly, her lips were moist and warm, her tongue probing, and we became locked together. There was no resistance when my hand cupped a breast, or slid to rest high on her thigh.

Eventually she broke away. Her skirt had worked to her waist, but she did nothing to restore its position. Somehow her blouse had become unbuttoned, but I couldn't recall being responsible for that.

She examined her exposed undergarments with a wry smile.

'I do the best I can to look nice,' she said, 'But it's difficult with what you can buy these days. Mmm . . . if only I could get hold of some real silk! Can't you imagine what that would feel like against your skin . . . all soft and clinging. Lovely!'

There could be little more erotic than the way in which she mouthed those words. Any further development was denied by the closing of the front door, as Mrs Parson's visitor made his exit, and her voice calling, 'Molly! Did I hear you come in?'

I covered pages with calculations, and it must have been three in the morning when I finally set them aside, having checked them a dozen times, but it was fatigue which made me finish, not a conviction that I'd got them right.

What little sleep I got was filled with dream images of Molly's body, and a screen of ephemeral white tissue, which frustrated my frantic efforts to fulfill my desires.

The works where the parachutes were made was near Norwich, a big hangar with giant tables, on which women worked with scissors and sewing machines. Scattered about the floor were remnants and offcuts of the white material.

The foreman I dealt with seemed a friendly man, and I ventured to ask him if it were possible to get hold of some of the spare bits.

He grinned. 'Girl friend want some knickers? Not supposed to really, but I'll see what I can do when you come to pick up the packs.'

That was on the morning of Friday — the trials being timed for the afternoon. I collected the two parachute packs and the foreman gave me a brown paper packet of offcuts. 'That should see you right with your girl, mate!'

I drove to Beccles where the parachutes were to be fitted, and loaded on to the aircraft, and then back to the yard to pick up Corbett, and thence to the beach for the trial.

There was a strong, cold wind blowing off the sea, a grey sky, conditions generally bad, but Corbett insisted that the trial went on. The lifeboats had to be dropped in all weathers, he maintained. He was getting irritable, his glasses misted by spray as he tried to line up the rangefinder. There were half a dozen others in rain coats and Wellingtons with clipboards, stopwatches and binoculars. It was quiet, except for the sound of the breakers, the wind and the screaming derision of gulls. Then there was the noise of engines as the Warwick came into sight from the south.

A radio gave a metallic crackle, and voices confirmed position and altitude for the trial drop. The plane went past us, climbed and then returned parallel to the shore.

Something dark detached itself from the fuselage, and then the parachutes flowered against the sullen sky.

I heard Corbett mutter. 'They look very big!'

Then someone shouted, 'It's not coming down!'

Which it didn't. An actual lifeboat hadn't been used. These were expensive and in short supply. We all watched a block of concrete, the equivalent mass of a lifeboat drift silently, high above our heads and inland, light as thistledown, descending very very slowly.

'Jesus!' someone elese exclaimed. 'Right towards the flaming pylons!'

I knew for certain that I had got the calculations wrong and I waited, paralysed and frozen for what Corbett would say but he did not explode. He turned towards me murmuring, 'Fantastic! If the wind were blowing on to the French coast, half a dozen of those could cause havoc!'

It was later established that a swathe of disaster had been sliced for a couple of miles inland. There was a power cut which lasted for twelve hours, wrecked telephone lines and a catalogue of damage to rooftops, greenhouses, cars and gardens. It had finally come to rest, carving a chunk from the tailplane of a B17 bomber at the American airbase.

Extraordinarily, Corbett was conciliatory.

'Don't worry about it, Corporal. It might not be your fault. I haven't checked the figures yet. I could have got the drift constant out by a power of ten. These things happen.'

Then he went back to extrapolations of what chaos might be inflicted on the enemy by the use of even bigger canopies and heavier blocks of concrete.

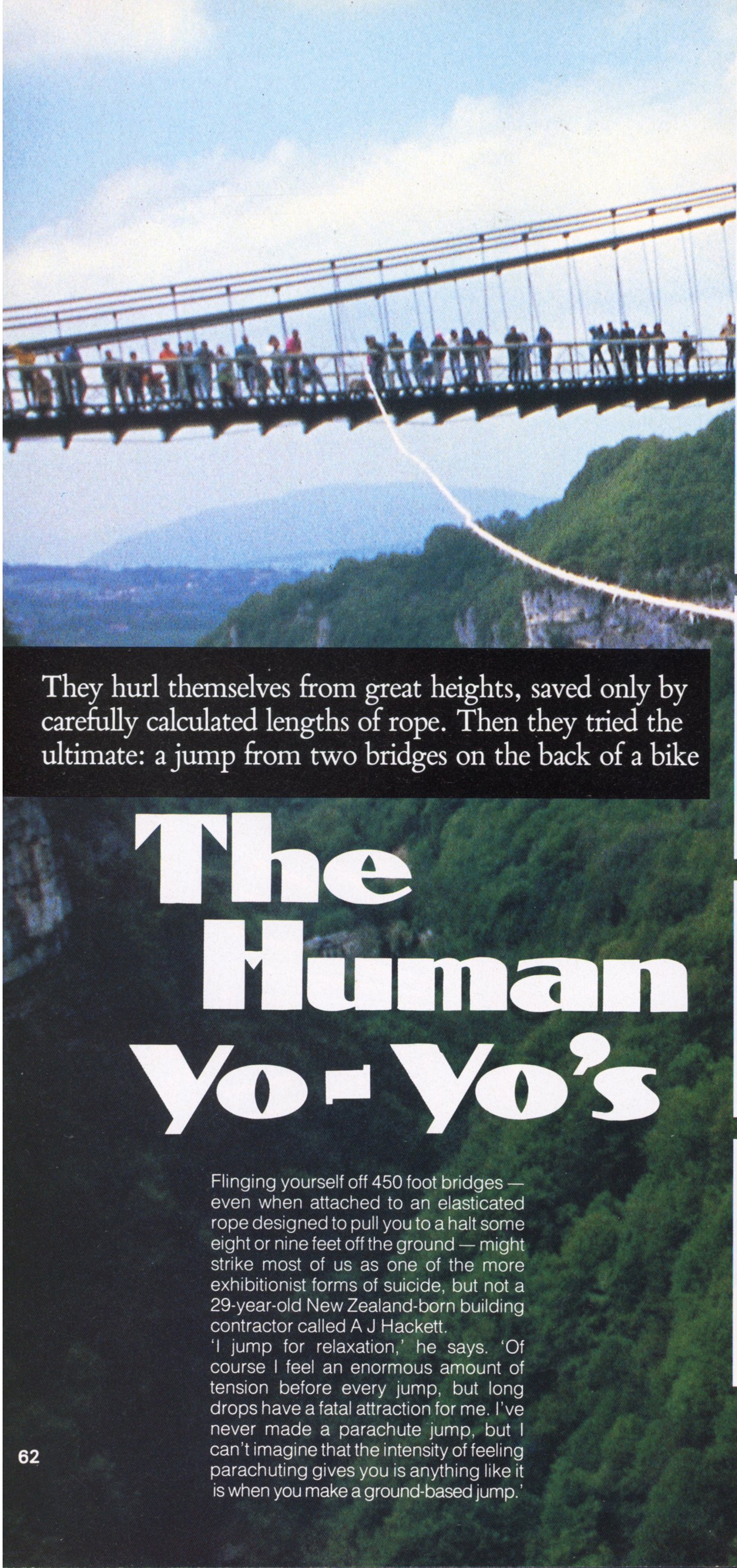
'Things will get sorted out,' he concluded. 'I've got to get my ideas to the Air Ministry as soon as possible. You take a couple of days off — you've earned them.'

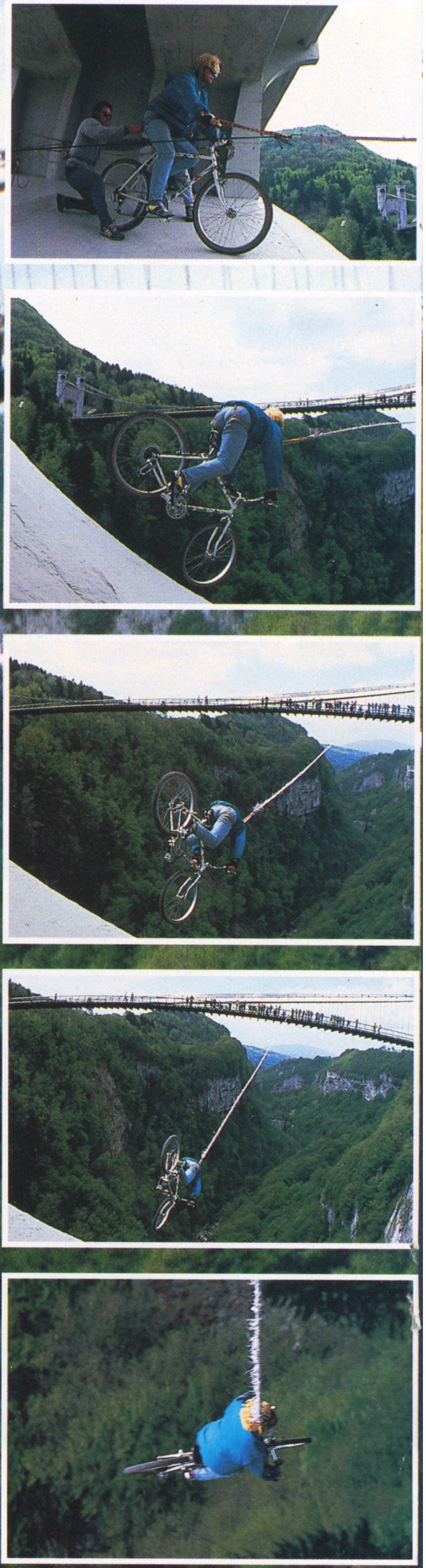
His sanguine attitude did not dispel my gloom and anxiety. Experience had taught me that blame for this sort of incident tended to avalanche down the tiers of official responsibility until it came solidly to rest at the lowest levels. There was only one, small factor of consolation — the package of silk from the parachute factory. Within the equivalent of the Siberian wastes to which the Air Force would surely condemn me, I might be warmed by the recollection of a few hours of passion spent in the voluptuous arms of Molly Parsons. I carried it away as though it were the Golden Fleece.

When I gave it to her, she said distantly, 'Thanks but it's not really much use to me now. Sorry you went to all that trouble.'

In explanation, she led me to her bedroom. When she opened the door, it was as if one had entered a snow cavern. White, silken folds lay on the floor, the bed and furniture, and were festooned over the walls. It was an entire parachute.

'Two of them came down this afternoon near the aeroplane where Alvin was working, and of course he brought one straight to me, knowing how grateful I'd be . . .' she told me.



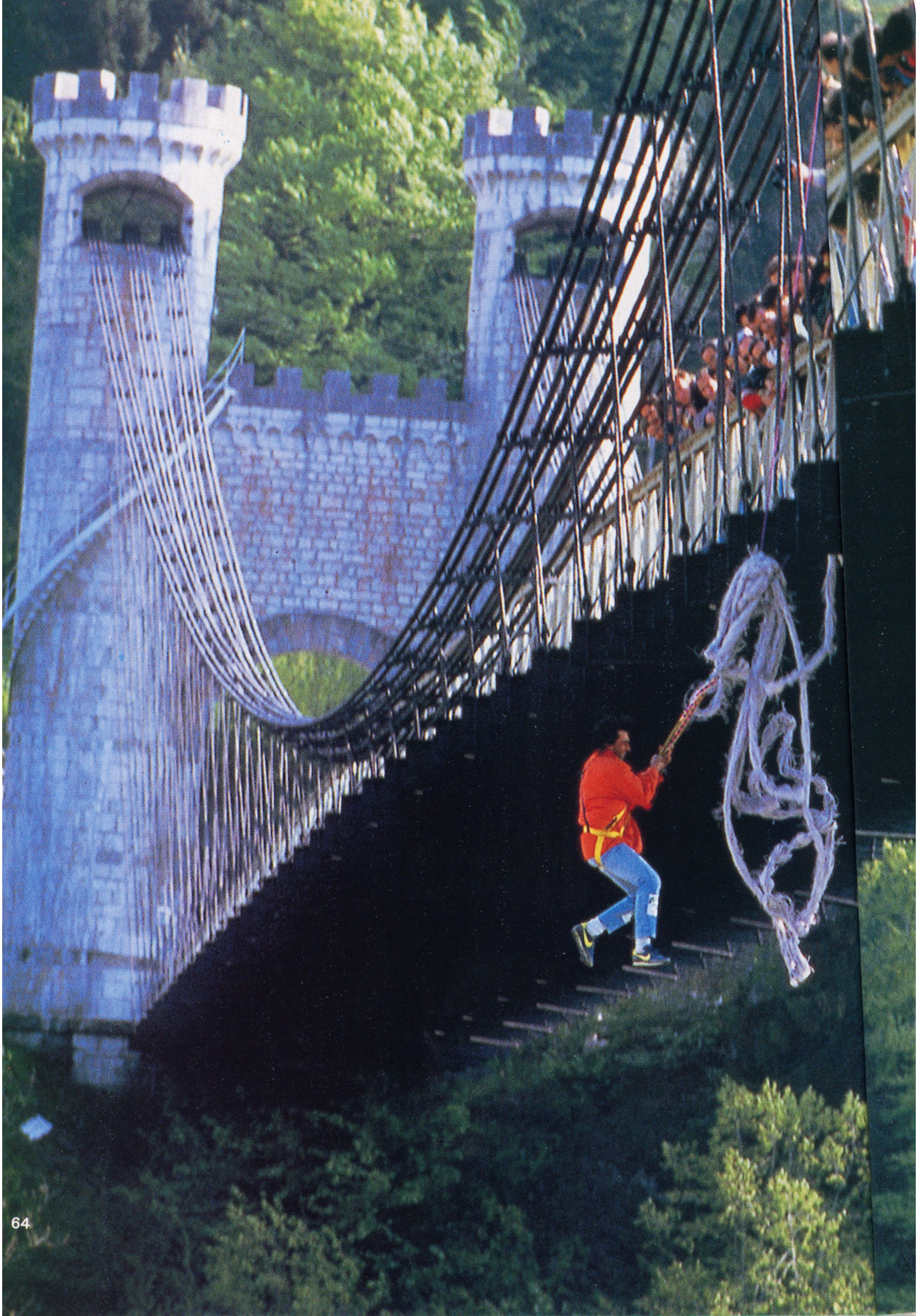


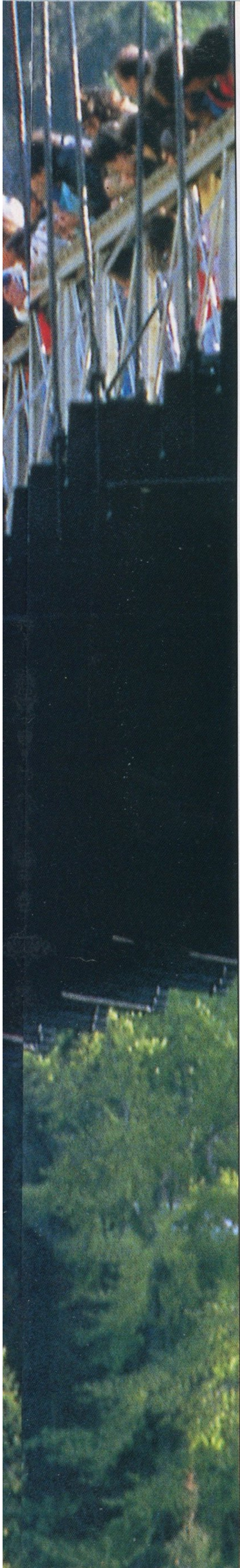
They hurl themselves from great heights, saved only by carefully calculated lengths of rope. Then they tried the ultimate: a jump from two bridges on the back of a bike

The Human Yo-Yo's

Flinging yourself off 450 foot bridges — even when attached to an elasticated rope designed to pull you to a halt some eight or nine feet off the ground — might strike most of us as one of the more exhibitionist forms of suicide, but not a 29-year-old New Zealand-born building contractor called A J Hackett.

'I jump for relaxation,' he says. 'Of course I feel an enormous amount of tension before every jump, but long drops have a fatal attraction for me. I've never made a parachute jump, but I can't imagine that the intensity of feeling parachuting gives you is anything like it is when you make a ground-based jump.'

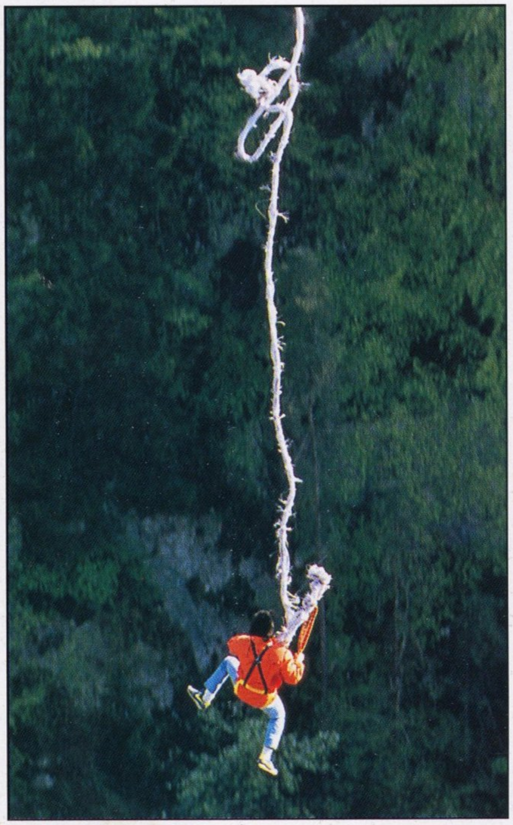




The Human Yo-Yo's

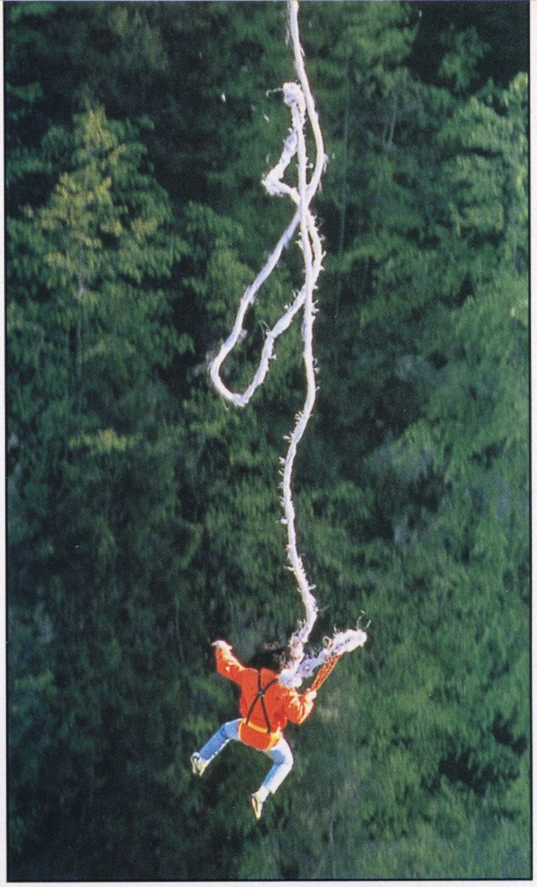
Hackett began his jumping career two years ago in Auckland, New Zealand, where, with the aid of fellow enthusiast Henry Van Hasch, he threw himself off a 250 foot high viaduct. By February of 1987 he had reached Europe and made his jumping debut from a cable car above the French skiing resort of Tignes. The fall was just under 300 feet, though Hackett expressed regret that he did not manage to brush the metre-deep snow below him.

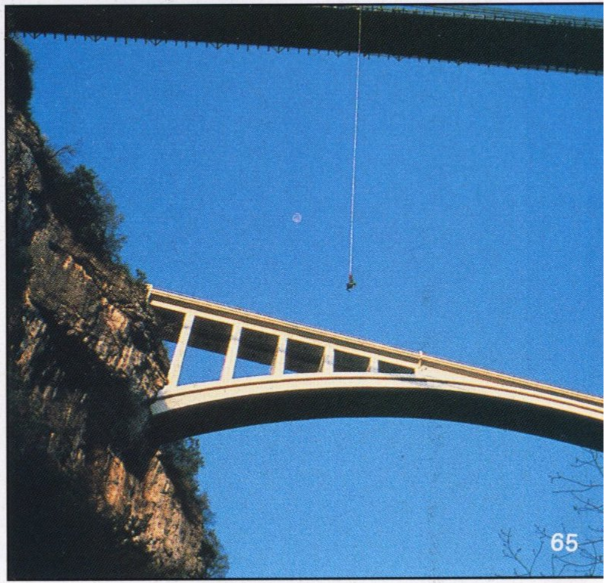
The inspiration for his next, and most spectacular stunt came from a newspaper story of a parachutist who had cycled out of an aircraft. Why not, he thought, do a similar jump from a bridge, or, better still, two? He found the ideal spot in France's Haute Savoie region, close to the town of Annecy: a 450 foot deep river gorge spanned by two bridges 100 feet apart. One end of his rope was attached to a suspension bridge, the other to a mountain bike and its rider on the lower span of the adjacent concrete bridge.



Fair-haired Henry Van Hasch made the first jump. 'I had the impression that I was not moving at all,' he said, 'but the other bridge was rushing toward me at an incredible speed. It was amazing.'

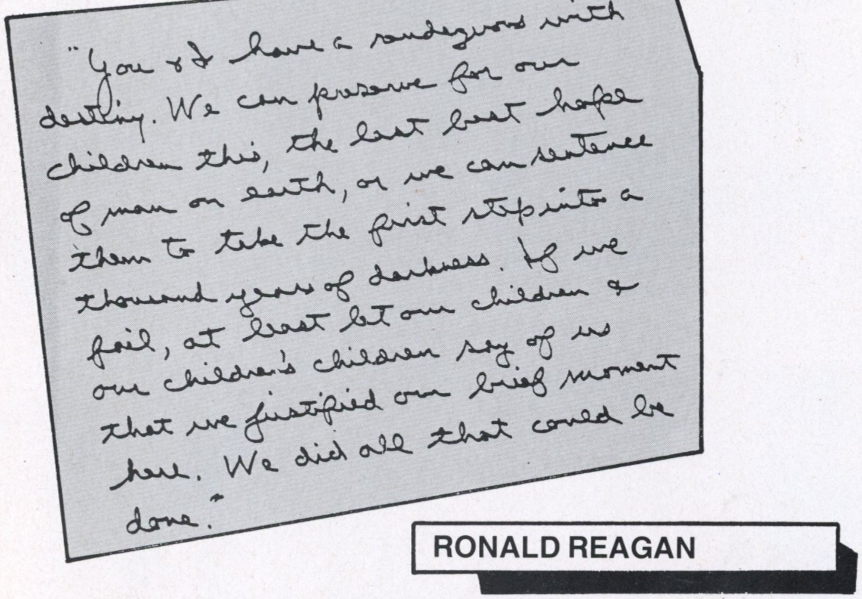
Next Hackett made a jump, without the bike but with a camera, the rope attached to his ankles. He reached 100 mph before his rope bounced him to a halt barely ten feet above the ground. It was a double triumph the 'yo-yo' men will find hard to top.





THE write STUFF

Our handwriting is the secret key to our real character — every loop, every stroke, the size and direction of the words we write — are telltale signs of the inner man. Or at least they are to a leading graphologist like Jill Marchant whose skills of analysis have been employed by thousands, from companies recruiting new staff to individuals seeking guidance on the right sexual partner or a new direction in life



"You & I have a rendezvous with
destiny. We can preserve for our
children this, the last best hope
of man on earth, or we can sentence
them to take the first step into a
thousand years of darkness. If we
fail, at least let our children &
our children's children say of us
that we justified our brief moment
here. We did all that could be
done."

RONALD REAGAN

Reagan's most striking quality is the control he has on his emotions. His goals are very high (high 't' bars) and there is a desire for greater activity (lower loops on the 'p'). He has very little intuition or empathy, however he comes across. He's an actor first and last. Pressure in his writing shows he suffers from stress.

When you write to your new girlfriend, do you give away the fact that you are desperate to get her into bed? Does your boss's signature on your pay cheque reveal that he's too over-stressed to do his job as well as he should? Although we were all carefully taught to write 'properly' at school, the individuality of our handwriting can reveal more about us than hours of psychologist's couch. And, if that sounds like the idle boast of a fairground sideshow, take note. More and more employers are using handwriting experts, or graphologists as they are known, to determine a potential employee's suitability for the job, and analysts are even being called in to examine a couple's compatibility prior to marriage. So beware, your livelihood and love life might depend on the way you handle your pen.

One of the world's leading experts on graphology is Jill Marchant. Based in the USA, Jill started work 18 years ago by setting up an agency to help companies find suitable employees. Soon she found that her ability to understand personality through handwriting could have wider applications. So she opened her doors to the public, and soon found herself becoming a combination of marriage guidance counsellor, psychiatrist and social worker. So much so that she now undertakes individual advice sessions to complement her analyses.

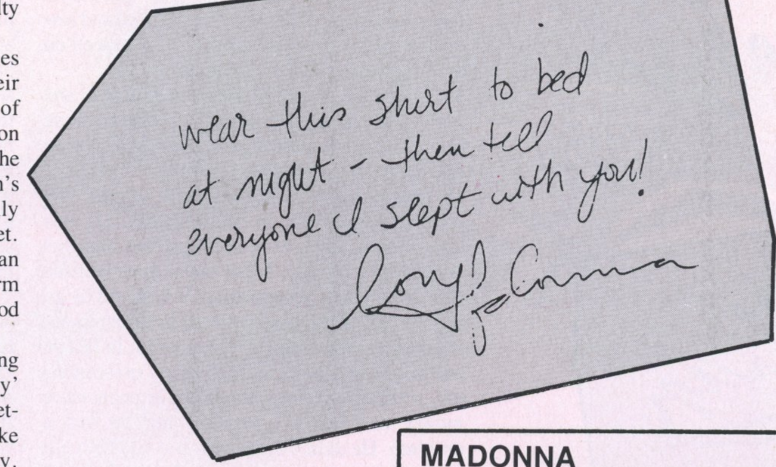
'I have found that graphology holds the answers to so many problems,' Jill told us. 'When I do the analysis I am looking through 300 character traits for combinations and variations, some not visible without a magnifying glass. Take for example that tiny hook at the beginning of a pen stroke — that governs the degree of acquisitiveness of the writer.'

'One of the first things I look for is the slant of the handwriting, which reveals the emotional response to the world, other people and life in general. Then I look for combinations of strokes. For example, someone might show that they have a fiery temper in one stroke, but that they can control it in another, so there is a balance. That's why I need a whole passage of writing rather than just one line. But to give you an idea, the way you cross your "t" alone could tell me your temperament, your degree of enthusiasm, determination, control, ambition, whether you feel those goals are worthwhile and your loyalty to your company or partner.'

Some of Jill's many customers are couples bringing examples of their writing to test their compatibility prior to marriage. One sample of handwriting can give more away about a person than living with them for years — and without the arguments! A simple test is the slant of a person's writing. A left hand slant shows an emotionally withdrawn personality likely to be easily upset. A strong right hand slant in contrast reveals an emotionally responsive, sympathetic and warm nature. Left and right slanters do not make a good match!

You might also like to look out for the following traits. No lower loops in letters like 'g' and 'y' and light pressure on the pen could mean a letdown if you like a hot time in bed. Writers like that show a lack of sensuality and sensitivity. Watch out too for double loops in the 'o' or 'u' (she's the deceptive type), extra tall 't's (prone to vanity) and very compact writing, signifying a wish to be private. If it's not too late, go for a girl with long upward-moving final strokes (generosity) applied with heavy pressure (sensuousness) and initial flourishes for a sense of humour. Or if you're after a nymphomaniac, look for writing so thick it's starting to blotch. The heavier the pressure, the greater her need for sexual gratification.

However compatible a couple may be, though, they're unlikely to have a successful relationship if one of the partners is suffering from stress, There's no point in finding a lively sensuous woman if all you want to do after a day at work is go to sleep in front of the television! Fortunately the symptoms of stress show up very early in handwriting, and, once recognised, curing it is that much simpler. One of the first signs is very heavy pressure on the pen, revealing a sharp reaction to stress which does not fade quickly, and if you are writing with inverted loops in letters 'm' and 'n', this also reveals a proneness to worry. Indecisive endings to letters or words makes matters worse, showing you are

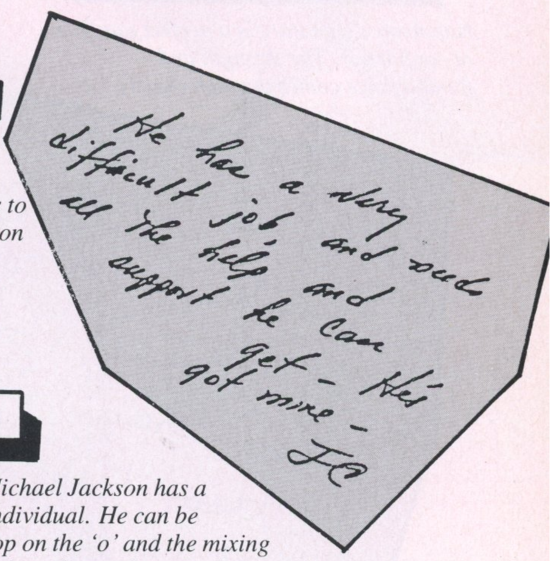

wear this shirt to bed
at night - then tell
everyone I slept with you!
Love Madonna

MADONNA

Madonna is very open-minded, intuitive and expresses herself fluidly. She also has integrity but there are indications of a certain lack of conviction about the worthwhileness of her aims.

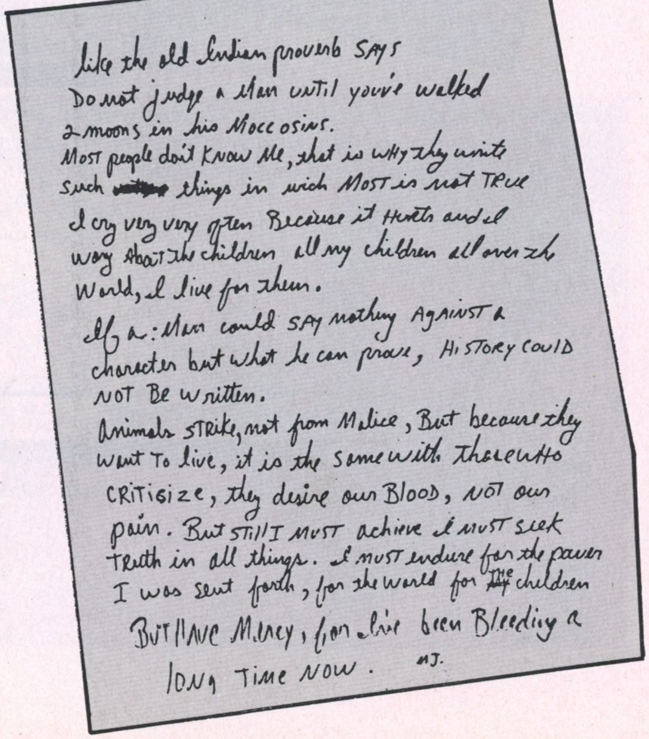
JIMMY CARTER

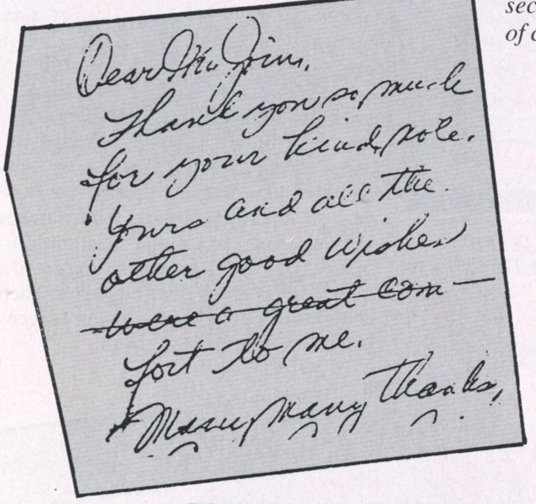
Jimmy Carter's monogram is very consistant with the rest of his writing. It shows he is a man of simplicity who wants to be clearly understood. He has high intuition and dignity but tends to fantasise his ideals shown by the flying 't' bars.


He has a very
difficult job and needs
all the help and
support he can
get - He's
got mine -
JC

MICHAEL JACKSON

Although with no clear image, Michael Jackson has a clear desire to be different and individual. He can be secretive as shown by the tiny loop on the 'o' and the mixing of capital and lower case letters show the need to stand out.

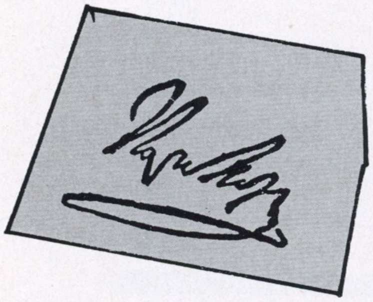

like the old Indian proverb SAYS
Do not judge a Man until you've walked
2 moons in his Moccosins.
Most people don't Know Me, that is why they write
Such [illegible] things in wich Most is not TRUE
I cry very very often Because it Hurts and I
wory about the children all my children all over the
World, I live for them.
If a: Man could SAY nothing Against a
character but what he can prove, HISTORY COULD
NOT Be written.
Animals STRIKE, not from Malice, But because they
want To live, it is the same with those who
CRITIsize, they desire our BLOOD, NOT our
pain. But STILL I MUST achieve I MUST seek
Truth in all things. I MUST endure for the power
I was sent forth, for the world for ~~my~~ the children
But Have Mercy, for I've been Bleeding a
long Time now. MJ.


Dear Mr Jim,
Thank you so much
for your kind note.
Yours and all the
other good wishes
~~were a great com~~-
fort to me.
Many many thanks,

MARILYN MONROE

Marilyn's writing shows secrecy and imagination, and that she almost craved responsibility, shown by her loops and flourishes. It shows unsurprising sensitivity to criticism, but what is interesting is her feeling of resentment as shown in loops before particular letters, such as the 'm' in 'much'.

THE write STUFF



NAPOLEON

Napoleon's signature is a perfect example of confidence. The strength and flamboyance comes through clearly.

the sort to give in easily; couple that with small loops at the beginning of an 'm' or 'n' (jealousy), retracing letters (a feeling of repression) and low 't' bars (lack of self esteem) and you're well on the way to your first heart attack.

Much stress is caused by work, or lack of it, and Jill's handwriting analysis has had some amazing success with vocational guidance, even helping one lucky chap to his first million.

'A man in his early forties came to me,' she recalled, 'obviously in deep distress. He was experiencing the sort of introspection one gets with a mid-life crisis. What had he done with his life? Had it been worthwhile? Where did he go from here? He had been working in the computer industry and had been *very* successful. In fact he had just been offered an immensely prestigious job, which was clearly promotion. It meant more money and better prospects, but he had a problem. He didn't want it. How could he, with a family to support, turn down such an opportunity?

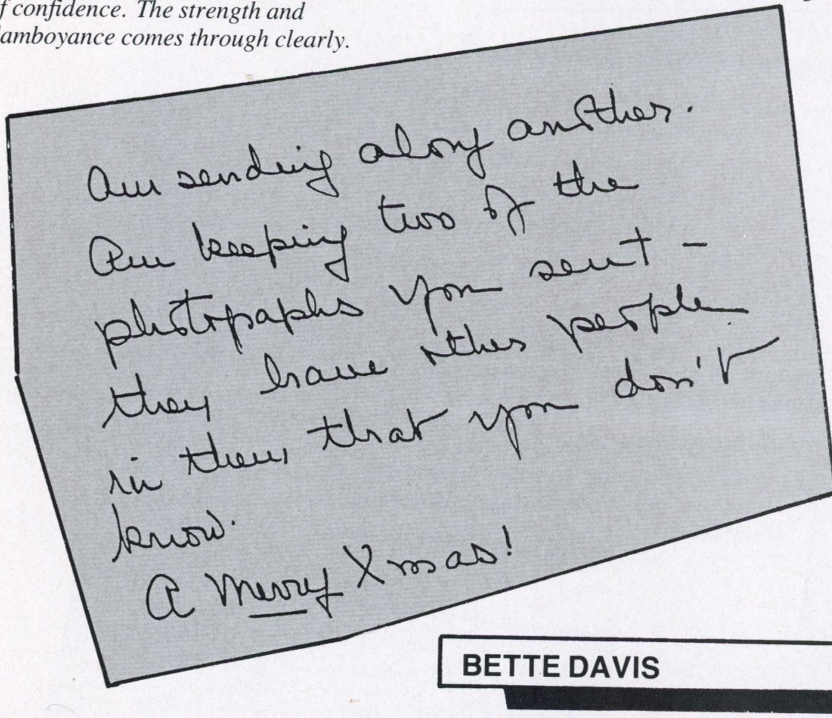
'When I analysed his handwriting, I was astounded at how good it was. This man was full of ideas, imagination, determination, and was a good self starter. He had so much energy in his writing he should clearly be running his own business instead of working for a large faceless organisation. I told him what I'd found and asked him what he'd do if he could wipe the slate clean and start again. Without hesitation he told me he'd always wanted to design women's boots and shoes. Great! We talked for a long time, and, by the time he left, he'd decided he was going to get his collection of designs together and take them to the Milan Fair only a fortnight away. He sold them. Now three years later, this man's company has taken off, all his boots and shoes carry his signature and he's a millionaire — after only three years!'

That signature alone could say a lot about him. Although it often bears little resemblance to the rest of your handwriting, your signature reveals not so much your hidden character, but the sort of person you would like people to think you are. In fact, many even copy their style of signature from people they admire. Although the way we sign things varies — that is, we write our name on a birthday card very differently from the way we endorse a cheque — certain character traits do become obvious. A legible signature for example tells the world, 'I want to be understood'. You're the open type. An incomprensible scrawl, on the other hand, shows that the writer would rather others kept away. Underlining your name as a continuation of the signature is a sign of self confidence and self reliance. You feel you are worth something and want people to know it.

But if people are able to alter their signature to reflect their feelings, surely they can also fake a 'good' writing style in order to be selected for a job? Jill Marchant disagrees. Frauds, she says, as in life are very easy to spot. There's no way to hide the real you, however ghastly, which can be embarassing for the honest graphologist, as Jill found out.

'The head of one international organisation asked me to work for them on the recruitment of major personnel. First, though, he wanted to test me, so he sent an example of handwriting for me to analyse. I looked at it and could see that the man lacked any integrity. He was dishonest and likely to deceive the company, so I wrote back saying "Don't hire him!" It was only later, when I visited the head's office, that I saw a handwritten note from him on his desk. The writing was his! But of course, he knew I was 100 per cent accurate, and that's why he hired me.'

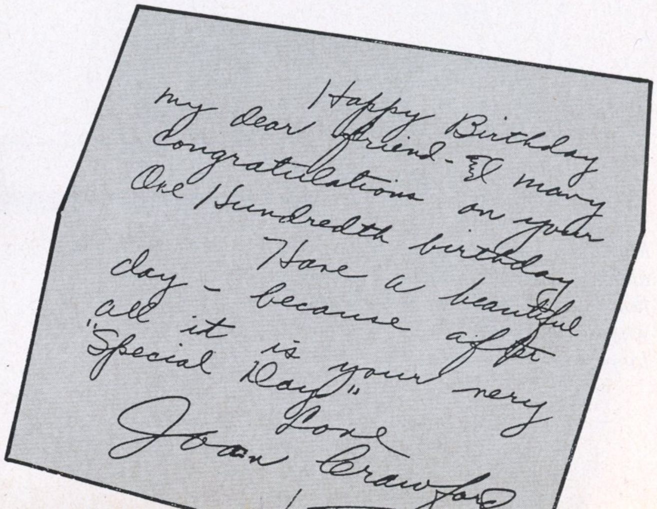
In short, handwriting is a direct mirror of the personality, and graphology can help you know and understand it better. You may not always like what you find out, but thanks to handwriting analysts like Jill Marchant, self awareness can improve your work and relationships with others. And, through the management of stress, might even help you live a bit longer! There's no doubt when it comes to becoming a success, the pen is mightier than the sword.



Am sending along another.
Am keeping two of the
photographs you sent –
they have other people
in them that you don't
know.
A Merry Xmas!

BETTE DAVIS

Many performers have backward slants to their writing. They are reserved people whose personality comes through their acting. The very slight slant in Bette Davis's handwriting shows that she shares that tendency.



Happy Birthday
my dear friend – & many
Congratulations on your
One Hundredth birthday
Have a beautiful
day – because after
all it is your very
'Special Day'.
Love
Joan Crawford

JOAN CRAWFORD

Joan Crawford's lower loops show creativity and imagination.

MAYFAIR SPECIAL OFFER

A NEW SLANT ON LIFE

ALL MEN HAVE PROBLEMS THEY CAN'T ADMIT — BUT WHERE DO THE ANSWERS LIE?

Leading international handwriting expert Jill Marchant says: 'The answer lies in knowing YOURSELF. Many men who face crises and problems in their lives find it difficult to talk to other men as intimately as women do — but they could find the solutions *themselves* if only they understood fully who they are. This is why I would like to share what I have found with *YOU*. Graphology is a totally non-threatening way of learning: *IT COULD CHANGE YOUR LIFE.'*

MAYFAIR has put together this special offer for you. For a fraction of her normal fee, just £9.99, Jill Marchant will analyse your handwriting according to her techniques. You will then receive a personalised multi-page analysis revealing *YOUR TRUE CHARACTER, PERSONALITY AND POTENTIAL.*

WHAT DOES YOUR HANDWRITING TELL YOU?

t	shows persistence	e	shows open-mindedness
i	shows impatience	i	shows attention to detail
g	shows imagination	d	shows sensitivity to criticism

Jill Marchant is a worldwide speaker on handwriting; over 250 major international companies as well as individuals retain her career guidance, counselling and recruitment services.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO FIND OUT WHAT YOUR WRITING REVEALS ABOUT *YOU* JUST FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE DIRECTIONS:

Using a ball-point pen, copy the following short paragraph in the space below or any unlined piece of paper. Write in your normal style. Please include your signature.

Dear MAYFAIR Magazine,
I would like to find out what my handwriting reveals about my personality. My interests include learning more about my strengths and weaknesses, so that I can realise my unused potential.
Many thanks for giving me this opportunity.

Signed . . . .

Post to: Mayfair Graphology Offer
PO Box 268, Caterham, Surrey CR3 6YD

Please send me . . . . handwriting analysis at £9.99 each

NAME (Mr, Mrs, Ms) . . . .
BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE

ADDRESS . . . .

. . . .

. . . .

I enclose crossed cheque/PO No . . . .

made payable to A.N.S. Ltd. for £ . . . . .

OR debit my Acess/Visa/American Express

the amount of £ . . . .

Card expiry date . . . .
My Access/Visa/American Express Card No.

Signature . . . .

ADDRESS . . . .
OF CARDHOLDER IF DIFFERENT
FROM ABOVE

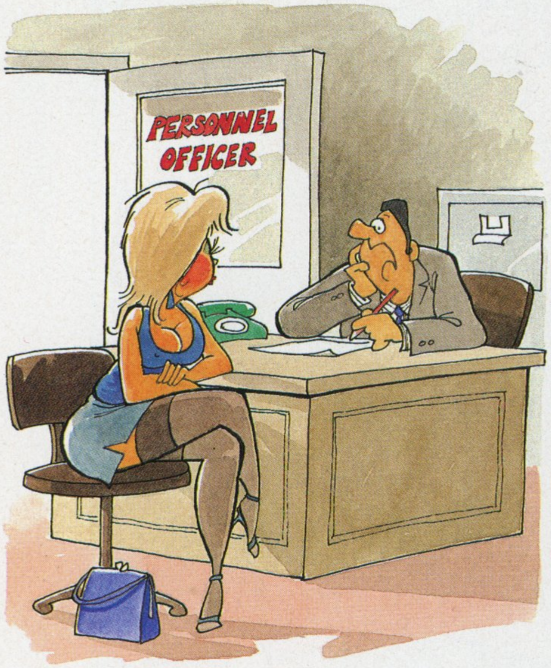
Please allow 28 days from receipt of order for delivery. Enquiries 0883-45514

CONDO
CONDOMS
LAGE
AMERICAN
TRIPPLE-RIPPLE
CONDOMS

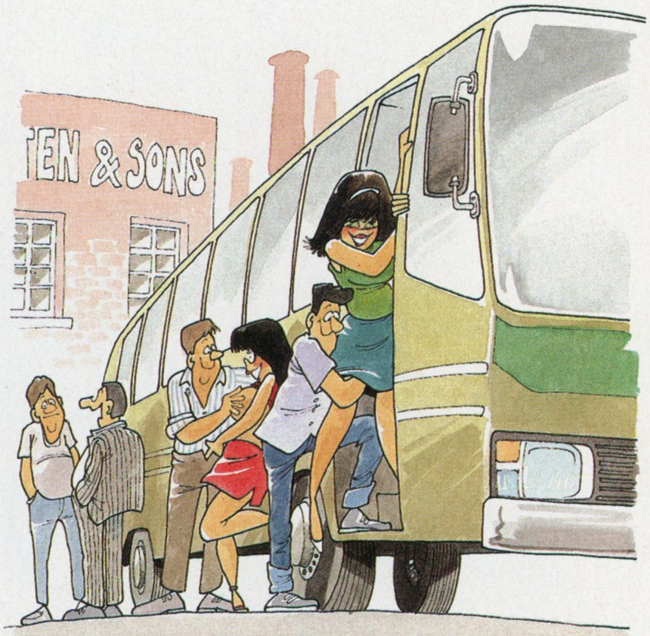
'These works outings are beginning to get somewhat out of hand.'

Poking fun at the works outing

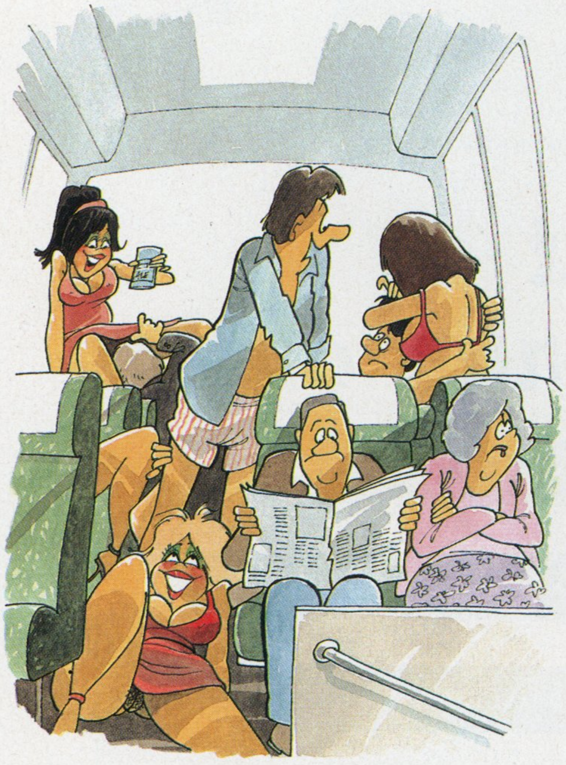
Just because the factory's having a day-off, says Anthony, doesn't mean the workers have to down tools



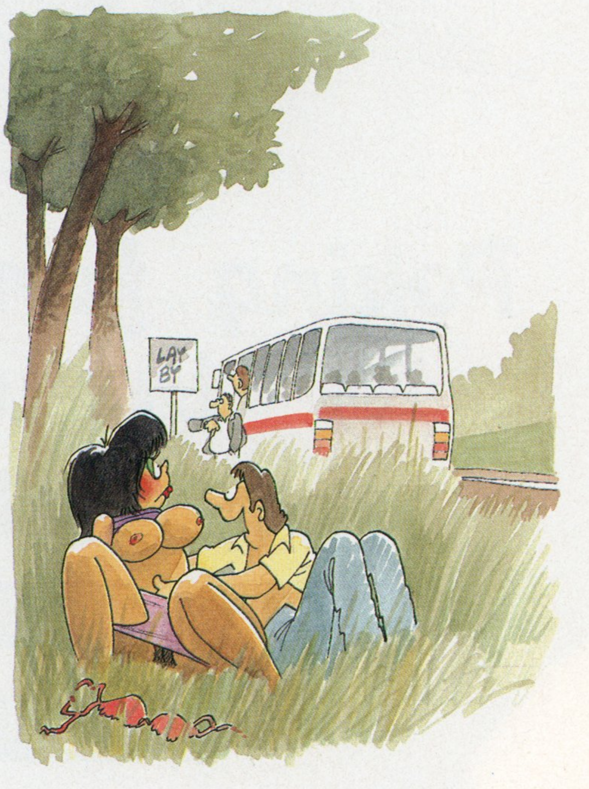
'I was really hoping you could start next week, Miss Simmonds . . . that's when we have our annual works outing.'



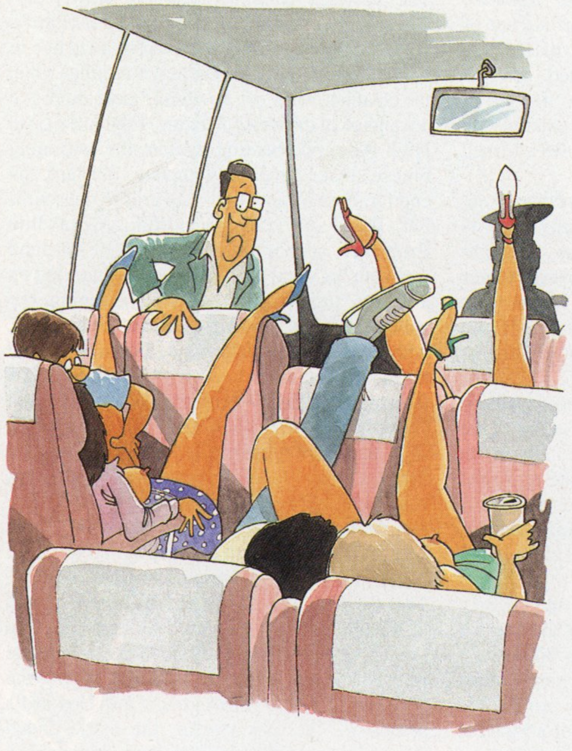
'Everyone seemed eager to return to the same place they went to last year.'



'I feel sorry for Alan, what with his wife working for the same company.'



'Don't worry, they won't leave without us . . . I've got the bottle opener'



'We'll be stopping in a moment so you can stretch your legs.'

CHEMIST
SHEATHS

'Make that two more packets of extra sensitive black ripple, Trevor'

'No need to worry about having a whip-round for the driver, lads — Gillian and Sue are seeing to him.'

GENTLEMEN THAT REMINDS ME . . . .

A ROUND-UP OF AFTER-DINNER JOKES

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RONALD COBB

The Chairwoman of the local Residents Association led a group of councillors to a large house being used as a brothel. Angrily she pointed to the building as one of the 'staff' came out of the door.

'Now that's what I call an eyesore,' she said vehemently.

'I agree,' said one of the councillors, 'and there's another nice whore over there.'

Great Quotes of Our Time:
Bob Hope was almost as famous as a golfer as he was a comedian, and was always being invited to take part in tournaments. On one occasion he was asked along with long-time sparring partner, Bing Crosby, to play dressed in overly large Hawaiian shirts that reached to their knees. Just as he was about to tee off, on the first hole of the tournament, some wag called out from the crowd.

'Hey, Bob, your slip is showing.'

Bob loked him up and down, then replied, 'Don't look now, but your father's slip is showing as well . . .'

One of Nurse Green's predilections
Is dealing with patients' erections.
She pulls down her knicks,
And sits on their dicks,
Then prescribes a course of injections.

In light of the current pre-occupation with safe sex, a Savile Row tailor started offering made-to-measure condoms. One of their first customers was a young man.

'I'd like a dozen condoms, please,' he asked.

'Certainly, sir,' replied the young female assistant. 'I'll just measure you . . .'

'What?'

'Don't worry, sir,' said the young blonde. 'It's perfectly private. Go into the back room and you'll find a series of numbered holes of different sizes. Find a hole that your penis fits and come back and tell me the number.'

'Okay,' said the young man, and went into the back room. When he was there he whipped out his John Thomas, and started trying the holes. Unbeknown to him, the female assistant just couldn't contain her curiosity, and watched through the crack in the door. She was highly impressed! His tool was so large it wouldn't fit any of the earlier holes, in fact, it was a tight squeeze to get it into the largest, hole ten. So overcome was she with its proportions, she couldn't resist stroking it as it popped through the hole in the wall. She stroked and stroked until finally he came. Then she quickly ran back behind the counter.

'Did you find one to your satisfaction, sir?' she asked.

'Indeed I did,' replied the man.

'And how many condoms would you like?'

'Oh forget those,' he said, 'How much do you want for hole ten?'

The City of Birmingham have just announced that they are going to hold a lottery to raise funds to replace the Bull Ring. The prize is £1,000,000 to the first person drawn out of the hat. Isn't that rather expensive, you ask. Not really. The winner will receive a pound a year for a million years.

Two retired Admirals were reading their copies of *The Times* at their club. After a long period of silence, one looked up from his paper thoughtfully.

'I say, Horatio,' he said, 'during your time in the "Andrew" you must have had some pretty hair-raising experiences.'

'That I did, old boy,' he replied.

'Well, which do you consider to be the most embarrassing?'

The old buffer looked surprised.

'Well, I haven't told anyone else this, but when I was in charge of *Renown* back in '41, we were approaching Scapa Flow when instead of saying, "Port ten," I said "Starboard ten". Well, all ruddy hell broke lose in the flagship and I almost took a chunk out of *Hood's* stern. Got hauled over the coals for that. What about you?'

'My most embarrassing moment? It must have been when I was on *Belfast* and the Captain caught me masturbating over a picture of a young Wren.'

'Really?' laughed his colleague. 'But most young ratings do that sort of thing.'

'I know, but this was on a tour of inspection I made last week.'

Share your after-dinner anecdotes. Send them to 'Jokes', Mayfair magazine, 95a Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1DZ. There are free subscriptions for readers whose jokes are selected, and £10 will be paid for each limerick. We no longer acknowledge receipt of jokes. Invididual subscription winners are notified by letter as to when their subscription starts. In the event of duplication among those jokes submitted, the Editor's decision on the awarding of a subscription to the winner is final.

THE LABORATORY OF HUMAN RESPONSE

QUEST

Stress has become the yuppie disease in todays's enterprise culture. But stress has always been a vital part of the sexual game. It can hone the seducer's art, undermine female resistance, or simply inspire mutual physical relief. Quest talks to three beneficiaries of the stress factor

Quest: Do you think stress can help your sex life?

PR Consultant: *Constant* stress will ruin it. I think sudden, unexpected stress can help, particularly if it's shared with someone you're attracted to anyway.

Quest: You mean your colleague at work?

PR Consultant: James, yes. I think we probably wouldn't have gone to bed together if we hadn't both been so involved in that crisis. But that's not the only time that sort of thing's happened to me.

Quest: When else, then?

PR Consultant: The main one that springs to mind was when I was a teenager. I was totally infatuated with a boy of about 19 — my first 'mature' man! He was the son of a local garage owner, and I literally dogged his footsteps. He took me out, but it was all very tame stuff — a goodnight kiss, if I was lucky. What I never realised till years later was that I had a reputation for being a bit of a local sexpot — on no evidence whatsoever, I hasten to *add!* Any girl who looked remotely attractive and obviously enjoyed going out with boys was prone to that. But my beau, who was actually quite shy, obviously felt intimidated.

Quest: What happened between you, then?

PERSONAL FILE
Name . . . . Withheld
Sex . . . . Female
Age . . . . 29 years
Town of Origin . . . . Hove
Other details . . . . This interviewee, an attractive brunette, took a diploma in business studies after leaving school and now works for a public relations consultancy. She married four years ago.

PR Consultant: We used to go to a fairly rough pub we knew, because they had good bands playing there. One night there was a particularly rowdy crowd, and one of them took a fancy to me. He started by making remarks, then, when I obviously wasn't interested, tried to muscle my boyfriend out of the way — literally. There was a scuffle and we all got thrown out, but then my boyfriend and I got the blame and the whole crowd of them came after us. We were literally chased down the high street. The fellow who'd fancied me actually caught hold of me, but my boyfriend thumped him — enough to knock him over. We ended up hiding on a bench at the back of some park until things had quietened down. I was shaking like a leaf — street brawls weren't exactly common in my life then! It was dark and quiet — we were half hidden by bushes. My boyfriend put his jacket over my shoulders to keep me warm. And I suddenly, desperately, wanted him to make love to me. I didn't care if it hurt, or if he wore a condom or even if he cared that much about me — I just *had* to know what it was like to feel him inside me. Needless to say, I was a virgin then.

Quest: But he didn't oblige?

PR Consultant: He just didn't realise how I felt — and I was too embarrassed to make it obvious. In the end he put his arm round me and told me not to worry. Then we caught a mini-cab home. I was so ashamed at the way I'd felt — and disappointed! — I wouldn't even let him kiss me good night. My poor old boyfriend — he's probably still no idea of the opportunity he missed! But I suppose it was better than getting pregnant.

Quest: I find it hard to imagine an experienced PR man being so reticent.

PR Consultant: 'Reticent' is the very last word I would use to describe James. He's very articulate, very smooth, very intelligent — *I* think — and very attractive, not just to me.

Quest: How old?

PR Consultant: Thirty seven, when I first met him. That was three years ago. He was a partner in the company I work for now. I remember from my first interview he seemed impressed by me, as a woman as much as professionally.

Quest: That didn't bother you?

PR Consultant: Not really. PR is a very glam industry. It's all about appearances. And, anyway, we worked extremely well together. James would never have made me his number two if he hadn't thought that.

> **I'd always imagined us making love slowly, but when it happened it was incredibly frantic**

Quest: But nothing overtly sexual happened?

PR Consultant: We flirted quite a bit. The guidelines were reasonably fluid, but they were definitely there. We were both married, after all. James had a wife and two kids tucked away somewhere.

Quest: Did you see much of each other out of office hours?

PR Consultant: Yes, simply because there aren't office hours as such when a project is going full steam. If we worked late into the evening we'd usually break for dinner in a local restaurant.

Quest: How did your special crisis arise?

PR Consultant: It was for the launch of a major new product — I can't tell which one. But we were asked to handle it literally at the last moment when another agency had been fired. Our senior director, who should have organised it, was abroad, so James took over. We had less than a fortnight and we were working all hours. The launch was due to happen in the Midlands, and we'd organised a TV celebrity to host it. Then, a couple of hours before zero hour, the TV person was rushed into hospital. The client was having hysterics. So James and I ended up presenting it.

Quest: Successfully?

PR Consultant: Remarkably, yes! I'm a fairly outgoing person, but I'm not used to performing in front of a thousand sales reps. Luckily James handled the bulk of it. The two hours went in a blur, and then I just started shaking. I was only glad it took place in the early evening. I couldn't have faced even half a day of polite chit-chat. Afterwards the reps ploughed into the buffet and booze, and the client insisted on champagne to show us how pleased he was. Then James noticed I was looking a bit green about the gills. Everyone was very sympathetic — I just felt stupid — and James insisted on taking me up to my room.

Quest: The launch was in a hotel?

PR Consultant: Yes, we'd stayed the previous night. In separate rooms.

Quest: Go on.

PR Consultant: I think James was as keen to get away from all as I was. We'd lived, eaten and breathed the product every waking minute for as long as we remembered, and even ten minutes break was bliss. As we went up in the lift, James was holding me and we were both giggling hysterically. Thank God nobody saw us. When we got to my room, he sat me on the bed and got a couple of whisky miniatures from the fridge. Then he sat down beside me and we toasted each other. I'm sure we were both light-headed. After so much hard work, and the incredible tension of the presentation, I felt I was going to explode. Then he put his hand on my knee and said, 'This is the high point of my career, Lucy (name changed), and I couldn't have done it without you. I don't know how to say thank you. The only way I can think of expressing it is — to fuck the arse off you!'

Quest: What did you say to that?

PR Consultant: Not a lot! I had the most awful cold, sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach — exactly the way I'd felt in the park years ago. And I knew he was right. We'd been so close to each other, we'd shared so much, the only thing left to do was go to bed with each other. Then James looked so serious he obviously thought he'd insulted me terribly, so he started to get up. But I caught his arm. I said, 'That would be lovely. I'd love you to fuck me, I wouldn't even mind if you'd make love to me, but a good fucking would be just fine.' I think it was the first time I'd ever seen James lost for words! He just gaped, and then we were falling back onto the bed and he was kissing me and pushing his hands inside my jacket and touching my breasts through my blouse. Then he was murmuring, 'Lucy — Lucy — you've no idea how long I've dreamed of doing this —' Which was exactly what I was thinking!

Quest: How did the reality measure up?

PR Consultant: I'd always imagined James and I making love in a very slow, languorous way, sort of reclining on silks and furs, taking ages to build up to some stupendous mutual climax. In fact, it wasn't like that at all! Part of it was probably the relief of tension, part was having waited so long. It just got unbelievably frantic, almost instantly. James only dropped his trousers and pants — *I* didn't take a thing of. One moment James was fumbling at my boobs, trying to reach my blouse buttons, then he was pushing his hand under my skirt. I started to help him by trying to pull my pants down myself —

Quest: Were you wearing tights?

PR Consultant: Support tights, but they finished at the tops of my thighs.

Quest: Go on.

PR Consultant: But when I reached down James was in the way, and then my hand touched his penis, and he felt very stiff, and practically on the point of exploding. So I was suddenly as frantic as he was, virtually shrieking at him to, 'Put it in! Put it in!' and pushing my crotch up at him. So he just pulled aside the leg of my knickers and charged straight in — *very* hard and sudden. But, thank God, I was so damp by then I think I could have taken a rampant rhino. And then we were jigging away.

Quest: Did he satisfy you?

PR Consultant: Oh yes. Every nerve point was just tingling to go. It's not often I have to wait for a man before I let go myself, but I was sure James was afraid I wasn't ready. In the end I had to say, 'Please do it, please let me feel it —' Then he just seemed to explode inside me — the sensation was gorgeous — and he just took me with him. Afterwards he was worried I hadn't come too — he wouldn't believe it when I insisted that I'm always quiet when I climax. He was sweet like that, in a way I didn't expect from a man who acted as self-assured as he did. So, of course, I had to prove it to him by giving him another chance to have me.

Quest: Immediately?

PR Consultant: No. I don't think it would have looked too good if the entire PR team had suddenly vanished. We were back downstairs in twenty minutes. But I spent the night with him.

Quest: And you had intercourse again?

PR Consultant: Several times. I was actually quite sore by the morning. It was lovely.

Quest: How often did sex occur after that?

PR Consultant: It didn't. We agreed over breakfast that a full-blown affair would make work impossible. I'm sure James wouldn't have objected to a re-match, but I had to insist.

Quest: No regrets?

PR Consultant: Only that I made the mistake of telling my husband. I don't know what made me think he'd understand. Things were fairly awkward for a while, until James left the agency. I've promised that if I get overwrought in future I'll take it out on my beloved, exclusively!

Quest: Thank you.

PERSONAL FILE
Name . . . . Withheld
Sex . . . . Male
Age . . . . 25 years
Town of Origin . . . .
Conway
Other details . . . . This interviewee studied engineering at university and now works for a large construction company. He owns a small house.

QUEST

Quest: I was wondering what effect stress has had on your sex life?

Engineer: You mean apart from hideous premature ejaculation at the first sight of willing female flesh? I should say it's been absolutely crucial.

Quest: Why?

Engineer: Because the whole nature of bird-pulling is stressful. You can't relax until you've banged each other stupid, and things can go phut at any point. In specific terms, I think one of the great lost opportunities of my life was when I was revisiting for my finals at university. I had digs with a woman in her early forties. Quite well-preserved, and sexy, no husband. An Irish lady. I'd come down for breakfast every morning, white and limp from burning the midnight oil. The landlady and I never actually said that much, though she was sympathetic enough. One morning she suddenly put her hand on my forehead and said, 'You've got to stop pushing yourself like this. My God, if I was twenty years younger, I'd take you upstairs and show you what a young man ought to be doing with his life.' My immediate thought was, 'Well I'll overlook the twenty years, if you will!' But then her other two lodgers blundered in, and the moment was lost. I never had the courage to follow it up, and she never said anything like it again, so that was that. But I did once get locked in a lift for four hours with a really curvaceous cutie — the sort of girl I'd probably never get off with normally. That turned out to be pretty stressful.

> She told me how committed she was to her boyfriend, as I stripped her on the stairs

Quest: What happened then?

Engineer: I was just going down in the lift at work one Friday afternoon. This woman got in — about 26, blonde, pretty, very sleek. I'd noticed her about the building, and put her down as junior executive fodder, too snooty for the hoi-polloi. Then, between the ninth and tenth floors, the lift car went clunk, and we stopped. There was some problem with the cables, and the local fire brigade were already out on two emergencies, so we were there until 5.30. But we didn't have wild, uninhibited sex all over the lift floor. Unfortunately. She was clastrophobic and started trembling, so I got the chance to cuddle her, and we ended up swapping life stories. Apparently she was living with some guy, and she wanted to get married and he didn't. By the time we were released I was thinking, what a really nice girl. So a couple of days later I rang her on the internal phone, ostensibly to see if she was alright, but really to ask her out for a drink one evening.

Quest: Did she come?

Engineer: Yes, she did, apologising that she'd meant to call me sooner to thank me for looking after her — *and* she sounded as if she meant it. We had a drink in a wine bar, then a meal there, and, since it was still relatively early, I offered to show her my house. I'd only just moved in. She was interested in interior design, so she said she'd like to see it, and perhaps give me some ideas about decoration.

Quest: Did you expect to have intercourse with her?

Engineer: I really didn't know what to expect. She seemed odd during the meal, very friendly, but all we seemed to talk about was her boyfriend. Apparently he knew she was seeing me tonight, which didn't seem encouraging. Then it became obvious she had quite serious doubts about going on with him. Finally she said she'd told me more things about herself in a couple of days than she'd told her boyfriend in years. So I thought it was worth pursuing. At home we sat next to each other on the sofa, drinking coffee, but there never seemed a good moment to make a move, so I took her round the house. She seemed fascinated by my bedroom, even bouncing up and down on the bed and making joking remarks about the mattress feeling well-used. But then she got up on the opposite side of the bed to where I was standing,and went out. By the time we got to the kitchen — which was all I'd managed to re-build so far — I'd made up my mind she was just enjoying a mild tease, and we'd never be any more than friends.

Quest: What changed that?

Engineer: The kitchen was actually tiny, and I'd crammed in a lot of cupboard space. She was bending over and I was squatting down, showing her how a sort of inner cupboard worked in one corner. Then we both straightened together, which meant that I pinned her, temporarily, in the corner part, and we were literally face to face. I went to move back, but she grinned and said, 'Quite like the lift again, isn't it?' And I knew she wanted me to kiss her, so I did. Then we were all over each other. When we came up for air, she said, 'I keep having these naughty dreams about what we could have got up to in the lift, with no one being any the wiser. Did you ever think that?' I told her I hadn't thought of anything else since.

Quest: So you did succeed in going to bed together?

Engineer: We went halfway to bed. I tell you, nothing in my sex life is straightforward. We went on kissing and canoodling, still standing up, and I manoeuvred her out the door into the hallway. By then her blouse was out of her skirt, and I had my hand underneath, fumbling with her bra clip. Then she decided that having naughty dreams was one thing, but you had to be trustworthy if you'd decided to live with somebody — at least *she* had. So there were more kisses and cuddles against the hall wall, during which I gave up on the bra clip and got one hand under her cup, enough to stroke her nipple, which was very stiff. She actually had quite nice boobs — much larger than you'd think with such a slim-looking figure. Then there was another break for agonising — while I kissed her neck and stroked her bottom under her skirt. She said she'd never spent a night away from her boyfriend while they'd been living together, and she wasn't about to start now. *That* I considered a definite step forward — though we were actually about halfway up the stairs by now. Not very easy when you're shuffling backwards with a woman in your arms! Then more kisses, I got the other bra cup off and started on the second nipple. And my heel hit the top stair and we toppled over with a thump onto the landing. She started giggling, saying this was all ridiculous, she hadn't come here to roll about the carpet with me.

Quest: End of seduction?

Engineer: Oh no. We were lying facing each other, but she wasn't trying to stand up, just grinning at me. Then her face became serious, and I realised that was the moment I had to make my move.

Quest: You had sex?

Engineer: We kissed again, but much more urgently than before, and then I began to move on top of her. She was helping me, pulling at her blouse buttons, telling me where the clip to her skirt was. I got a glimpse of her bare boobs, and bent down to kiss them and roll her nipples between my teeth. She moaned, and pushed her boobs against me, but at the same time she was reaching down and tugging at my trousers, trying to find my zip. I had the feeling that, having made up her mind she was going to be naughty, she wanted to feel less bad about it by doing it as quickly as possible. Perhaps I read her wrongly. I was anxious enough, too, of course: it had been a good few months since I'd last dipped my wick, and certainly not with anyone as lovely as she was. So, as I leaned back to pull her skirt off, I deliberately slowed things down a bit by taking my own clothes off.

Quest: What was she wearing?

Engineer: A slip, knickers and tights under her skirt. She sat up, while I pulled her slip over her head, and her bra came off with it. Then she lay back and watched me as I drew her knickers and tights down together. And, God, she was gorgeous. Not enormous boobs, but a lovely round shape, little pink nipples, slim waist and a skimpy little blonde fuzz over her pussy mound — I thought at first she'd shaved herself, but she was just very blonde. It was a supreme effort not to just go *blah!* and explode all over her, and she must have seen it in my face, because she gave me a little smile and said, 'Go careful now, don't waste anything.' So I leaned over her again, and she opened her legs under me. I touched her pussy, which felt as hot and wet as I was hard, then I put my tip between those lovely pink, half-bare lips, and suddenly I was sinking into her, feeling her close round my cock, all warm and liquid and tight, and we were away.

Quest: Did you both climax?

Engineer: *I* did! No, I wasn't Superman. About half a line of bridge load computations was my limit, then she had the benefit of six month's involuntary abstinence. She was perfectly pleasant about it. When I'd groaned all over her, she said, 'That was lovely.' But there was no way I could let someone as nice as that go with a slam-bang. As soon as I'd slipped out of her, she started to get up, but I began kissing her again, moving round to her back so that she had to roll onto her front. I don't know how her boyfriend normally managed things, but she seemed quite surprised. 'Do you want some more already?' she said. I intimated that we were only just beginning, which was a bit more ambitious than was justified. She sounded interested at that, but I was still a way off getting hard again, so I began stroking her pussy from behind, and then licking her.

Quest: Was she lying on her stomach by this time?

Engineer: Yes, with her legs open. I was kneeling on the stairs behind her, eventually with my head and tongue jammed between her cheeks. And that actually did bring her off, though by the end I was cupping her crotch with my hand, rubbing her pussy quite fiercely. Then, as she finished her spasms, I got between her thighs, lifted her bottom and slipped in myself. I managed a bit more than three or four strokes that time, which she seemed to enjoy. After that I needed intensive care for a good half hour. When we got our breath back, she kissed me and said, 'Almost as good as a lift shaft, eh?' which I thought was quite witty.

Quest: Did you ever manage to repeat the experience?

Engineer: No. I saw her three or four times, but she was obviously in an agony of guilt about her boyfriend. I think if I'd pledged undying love, I'd have stood a reasonable chance. I liked her and I'd have done a lot of another go at that body, but I didn't want to make any kind of longterm commitment, so it faded out. But whanever I go in tall buildings now I *always* use the lift!

Quest: Thank you.

> **As I danced knickerless I didn't realise he was lifting my dress higher and higher**

PERSONAL FILE
Name . . . . Withheld
Sex . . . . . Female
Age . . . . 31 years
Town of Origin . . . . Banbury
Other details . . . . This interviewee, an attractive blonde, married at 19 and divorced six years later. She has run her own lodging house in East Anglia for the past five years, and has a young daughter.

Quest: Would you say stress is a factor in your enjoyment of sex?

Landlady: Yes, to be honest. I'm not so bad now, but once upon a time, unless I was worried sick that my fellow was seeing somebody else, or about to run off, or just didn't care about me, then I never felt as if I was really in love. I must say Rick, my ex-husband, never let me down on that score!

Quest: He made you worry?

Landlady: He wasn't just good-looking, he was attractive too — I mean, with all that chat. But you never knew if he meant it or not. I couldn't resist that. Neither could a lot of other women, unfortunately. You wouldn't believe what he did to me on our first date.

Quest: Go on.

Landlady: We met at a disco. I'd seen him a few times, always with different girls, and fancied him, and even been warned about him, but at 19 I thought I knew all about men. Anyway, Rick — *very* casually, I thought — eventually deigned to ask me to dance. Then he offered me a drink. I'd planned how cool and hard-to-get I was going to be, which of course flew straight out the window. Five minutes after finishing our drinks we were petting in an alley at the back of the disco.

Quest: This man was so overpoweringly attractive?

Landlady: *I* thought so, but I was even more worried that if I didn't make myself pleasant he'd simply shrug his shoulders and vanish. In the looks department I was doing alright then. I wasn't used to boys taking me for granted.

Quest: How 'pleasant' were you?

Landlady: French-kissing, cuddling — he put his hand into my blouse and stroked my breasts. He wanted me to take my bra off, which I wouldn't, but I was only wearing one of those thin, boob-trap things, and you could feel all of me through it. Then he put his hands under my skirt and started stroking my bottom. But when he slipped his fingers down the waistband of my knickers I wouldn't let him go any further.

Quest: Did he want intercourse?

Landlady: Oh yes. He made that *very* obvious. That was another surprise. Most of the boys I went out with tried *something*, but very few had the bottle to try full sex right off. But not Rick. He pushed his crotch against my stomach and I could feel his enormous hard ridge down the side of his thigh. 'You don't think I get like this with everyone, do you?' he said. 'You can't leave me in pain. Come on, no one'll see us out here —' And while he was talking he was gently rubbing himself against me, letting me feel how big and hard he was.

Quest: And that tempted you?

Landlady: Yes! My heart was thumping like billy-o. But I did have some sense of self-respect, and I was terrified that if I did give in then he was quite capable of saying, 'Gee thanks, cheerio!' and vanishing.

Quest: You weren't a virgin?

Landlady: No. Then I thought he was going to unzip himself anyway, but I felt him touching the front of my pants. Before I could object, we were kissing again, really deeply, which left me weak at the knees anyway, and he began sawing me with my knickers.

Quest: 'Sawing' you?

Landlady: He'd taken hold of the waistband at the top of my bottom and over my pussy, and he just pulled each bit in turn, so that my gusset slipped backwards and forwards between my legs.

Quest: What effect did that have?

Landlady: Well I'm not going to draw you a diagram! I thought the pants would end up inside me — the pressure was right on everything that mattered. I was unbelievably wet.

Quest: Did you have an orgasm?

Landlady: For one sparky second I actually thought I would — I'm speaking with hindsight. At the time I'd never had a climax. I just felt something extraordinary was about to happen, and then it dawned on me how excited Rick was getting, and my courage failed me. Of course, afterwards, I was as uncomfortable as him — my pants were like a piece of wet bootlace. Rick said, 'Take them off. No one'll see.' But I had to go to the loo and tidy up, even if he started chatting up someone else.

Quest: Did he?

Landlady: No, strangely enough, which was just as well because I'd stuffed my knickers in my handbag. We sat down beside each other in a corner booth, and after a minute I took his hand and put it on my thigh. Then I pulled back my skirt with my other hand until he was just touching skin, and he realised it was right at the top of my thigh, so I couldn't have been wearing pants. I shiver now at some of the things I got up to, but it was worth it for the look on his face. Then, of course, he wanted to have a proper feel, but I tugged my skirt down and closed my knees and wouldn't let him. He just shrugged and said he wanted to dance. My skirt was loose and flowing, very light material but well over the knee, so I wasn't too nervous about that. After some slow, smoochy numbers with the lights down I was beginning to feel quite relaxed and sexy, especially at the way he was smoothing his hands over my bottom. Then I started hearing little sniggers and gasps. I looked up to see what was happening, and suddenly realised two or

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QUEST

three people were looking at Rick and I . Then one of the bouncers tapped Rick on the shoulder and said, 'I'm sorry, sir, your girlfriend seems to have forgotten something.' Rick acted all surprised, straightened up and let go of me and I felt my skirt sink back onto my bottom.

Quest: He'd exposed you?

Landlady: I'd been so wrapped up in dancing with him I hadn't noticed him inching the skirt material higher and higher, until a good part of my bare bottom, and God knows what else, was on view. I thought he'd deliberately set out to humiliate me in front of my friends, just because I wouldn't have sex with him.

Quest: What did you do?

Landlady: Apart from slapping his face and storming out? I spent a fortnight cursing myself for getting involved with such a rat. I couldn't understand what he must have seen in me to think he could have got away with being so outrageous. Then one evening he appeared on my doorstep, with a huge bunch of flowers. My mother answered the door. Big, corny gestures always work with her, and he was already chatting up her and my father in the lounge by the time I got down. Apparently he'd been away, but he'd been desperate to get in touch to put right an unfortunate misunderstanding. But he hoped to make things up to me now, perhaps over a meal — and he mentioned the name of the most expensive local restaurant.

Quest: Did you go?

Landlady: Between my parents and him I didn't have much choice. As far as mum and dad were concerned, having him turn up outside our council house in a BMW, well-dressed, oozing charm was more than enough. And he *was* like a different person. Attentive, interesting — he told me he'd just broken up with someone the night we'd met and I'd got the brunt of it. By the end of dinner I honestly thought I'd sorted him out. I even thought of teasing him just enough to make up for my humiliation. So, when he asked me back to his flat for a coffee, I said yes I'd really like that.

Quest: Who made the first move?

Landlady: He did, by kissing me as we sat on the sofa. Then the hand came up onto my boob. I toyed with the idea of letting him undo my bra this time and have some genuine flesh. Then the telephone rang. It was obviously a girl, very keen on coming over. Two minutes later she rang again. Rick was saying he couldn't possibly see her. The phone was right next to the sofa. I couldn't hear what the girl said, but I could hear her tone. She was obviously desperate. That's when I had a glimpse of the first Rick. I *knew* he'd been to bed with the girl on the phone, and I knew, if she came over, he'd do it with her again. And suddenly all the confidence I'd built up just vanished. I felt as out of control as I had outside the disco, and the problem was, being so close to him again, I fancied him even more.

Quest: So you left?

Landlady: That's obviously what I should have done. In fact, I made him go to bed with me. After he'd told the girl on the phone that he wouldn't let her in even if she did come round, we kissed again, then I said, 'Don't you normally turn the lights down when you're taking a girl's clothes off?'

Quest: That would certainly have made him go to bed with you.

Landlady: For about five seconds I actually had him completely non-plussed while he worked out whether I was joking or not. Then his expression changed, and I knew there was no way I was going to stop him having me this time.

Quest: So he did?

Landlady: He got me down to my bra and slip before he broke off to turn the lights down — about two notches on the dimmer! Which was embarrassing because I'd never done a complete strip in front of a boyfriend before. I ended up stretched out on the carpet with a cushion under my bottom, probably looking like some sacrificial maiden. He just knelt down between my legs, took hold of his penis and slipped it into me.

Quest: No foreplay?

Landlady: None at all. He just penetrated me as far as he could go, and stopped. I looked at him in surprise, thinking he'd found something wrong with me. He grinned and said, 'Just making sure I'd get to the finishing post — last time you wouldn't let me through the starting gate. Now we can enjoy ourselves.' And he started to pull back. I was so angry I just saw red — it was like the disco all over again. So I instantly pushed myself forward and grabbed at his thighs, stopping him. I said, 'What makes you think I'm *not* enjoying myself?' And I tightened my legs round him, squirmed my pussy against the base of his penis, and squeezed him inside as well.

Quest: With what result?

Landlady: His face went red, and his body stiffened, then he started gasping, and I felt him pumping into me.

Quest: Did you enjoy it?

Landlady: Oh yes. But he didn't seem to be limp when he'd come, because he started pushing into me almost at once, gently at first, then faster and faster until he'd made me come, too. So we were even.

Quest: It sounds more like a tournament than a romance.

Landlady: Yes! But the sexual sparks were always there, even when I knew he'd been with other women. If I hadn't been left the boarding house by a relative I might still have been with him now. You see what sexual stress can do to a woman!

Quest: Thank you.

> **'Don't you normally turn the lights down,' I asked 'when you're undressing a girl?'**

My wife and I enjoy sex, but recently there's been a snag. Like many other married couples, every time we make love we hear voices like: 'Mummy, can I have a drink of water?'

Not in front of the children

Whoever said children should be seen and not heard has never suffered *coitus interruptus* caused by their unannounced arrival at the bedside. It is strange that the young of the species who find it so impossible to keep the noise down at any other time of the day can move with the stealth of a thief in the night when the invasion of their parents' privacy is the goal.

The first occasion this happened was when our eldest was two. She had just got to the stage of sleeping through the night, and we were beginning to rediscover the joys of the marital bed. My wife, unusually responsive and even more unusually, dominant, had just got in the saddle, so to speak, and got off to a brisk canter, when there was a whimpering close to my left ear. I opened my eyes in surprise and pride — Penny takes at least thirty minutes to get to the whimpering stage as a rule — and found myself eyeball to eyeball with our tearful tot.

We knew she was a bright child but even we were astonished at the speed with which she correctly interpreted the previously unheard phrase 'Get the hell out of here!' and scampered off. Unfortunately she also took my words as a signal to drop the guise of perfect silence and resumed her customary howl. We could hear her cries of growing anger as she ran up and down the landing. This necessitated Penny getting out of bed, quickly followed by Penny getting back into bed and beginning a violent verbal assault on me for cruelty to a mere baby, and concluding that I could damn well go and calm her down myself.

That was some time ago, and what followed was years of reinforcement of the commandment 'thou shalt not enter thy father and mothers's sanctuary without first knocking on the door.' But this has not yielded the results for which one might have hoped. After a prolonged period when it had begun to look as though our misery was behind us, the trouble began again.

We had some friends staying who had two children, one aged four, as was our daughter by this time, and another rather younger. One morning we came sleepily to, and fell into the famous cocktail the Long Slow Screw. We were just getting to the Screw phase having passed the Long and the Slow areas satisfactorily, when Penny murmured sleepily, 'What's that sound?' There was something hushed and whispering which, as we lay motionless in concentration, transformed to unmistakeable giggles. There were the three of them, at the end of our bed, with smiles wide enough to ram a fist into.

'Emma,' said our visitors' eldest, in a badly orchestrated stage whisper, 'what do you think you mummy and daddy are doing?'

But this was nothing compared to the experience of one of our friends. Dave was separated from his wife, and as a consolation or a punishment, depending on how you look at it, got their three-

ILLUSTRATION
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Not in front of the children

year-old son for alternate weekends. On this occasion his new girlfriend was staying and, unused to the strictures of family life, she had spent the day whipping him into a frenzy of unbearable sexual excitement. They had no sooner settled junior for the night than she stripped down to her French knickers and spread herself across the fur rug inviting him to do what he would. He had done what he would once, and they had just re-aligned to do it again with her on all fours, doggy fashion, when Dave in mid thrust, was apprised of a small voice.

'You didn't bring me my drink of water, daddy.' Standing in the doorway, was the fruit of his loins observing the scene with studied gravity.

Feeling that some explanation was required, Dave proffered hopefully, 'Hello, Daniel. Suzanne and I are just playing horses.' It must have seemed like a flash of inspiration at the time but the extent of Dave's error could be measured by the rate at which the child's expression changed from puzzlement to glee. He sprang on Dave's back with the speed of a young Lester Piggott, using Suzanne's buttocks for a leg-up. Bouncing up and down with cries of 'Gee up daddy!' Dave never disclosed which horse won but his ex-wife reckons it must be the only time he didn't come first…

Such experiences give a whole new meaning to *'l'enfant terrible'*. We had a similarly chastening experience when our child was not much older than Dave's. At that time the two kids had a toddlers wing and, being a bit of a handyman, I had fixed two stout hooks into the top of the door frame between the living room and hall so that the seat could be fixed indoors. When the swing was unhitched the hooks remained in the position; they would not have supported a man's weight but were certainly strong enough to withstand the struggles of anyone who, wrists stretched above her head, should be tied to them by nylon stockings…as I told Penny. And she was surprisingly acquiescent to my suggestion. She looked divine that night, vulnerable, desirable, her raised arms lifting her breasts tantalisingly. She had been no more keen on oral sex than on bondage but tonight I was determined she would like it all.

I brought from the fridge some whipped cream in an aerosol can, some strawberries and a chocolate flake. I kissed her, pushing a strawberry from my mouth into hers (I'd seen it done in a film), and then began to spray the cream over her breasts and across her stomach until she was dressed in a bikini of fluffy white. I arranged a few strawberries in strategic positions and sprayed her some more, teasing us both and delaying the cleaning up operation. Then I unwrapped the chocolate flake, and *pièce de resistance.*

'What's that?' Penny seemed unusually naive.

'Chocolate flake, darling.'

'I mean that noise, stupid! Emma's out of bed!' There were footsteps on the landing. I bounded up the stairs and headed her off in the nick of time. She immediatley began to howl, 'Want mummy! Want mummy!' a sentiment with which daddy agreed wholeheartedly, thinking of strawberries, cream and chocolate flakes.

As it happened, I had two hours to think about them. That was how long it took to pacify and restore to sleep said child in the absence of its mother. I did think of bringing Penny up, perhaps grabbing a lick on the way, but the child screamed again every time that damn squeaky floorboard (I'm not such a good handyman as all that) announced my attempted departure. When I finally got back to Penny, her face wore a glazed, fixed look, and the cream had dried on her to rivulets of white powder. She had trodden on some of the strawberries and the carpet was a squelchy mess around her feet. She greeted me with a colourful and lengthily prepared speech, surprising me with the range and extent of her vocabularly. I suggested that a hot shower together might restore our spirits.

'Don't even think it!' she hissed, inspecting fingers from which the blood seemed to have drained. 'You could have warped that child forever if she'd seen us!' *I* could! I thought. It wasn't me standing there like a leftover ice cream sundae. But I know when I'm beaten. So I ate the chocolate flake and went to bed.

With our kids now eight and six, old enough to begin wanting their own privacy, they might understand others' need for it too. You might suppose. You would be wrong.

Look at last week for example. It may well be foolhardy for parents to attempt carnal pursuits outside the hours of, say 11 pm to 5 am which (kid's nightmares/drinks of water/lost teddies apart) is likely to be the time of least interruption. But there are occasions when one's animal passions just cannot wait for the evening and one is, after all, married. It is, when all's said and done, legal. And they are, for goodness sake, only children. So Penny organised the kids in

turn to page 102

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continued from page 100

Not in front of the children

front of the Saturday morning TV (what a life saver) and we locked ourselves in the bathroom. It was a delicious moment. Daytime sex is such a rare treat when there are kids about that the anticipation was exquisite. She undid my jeans slowly, sensuously, how she used to before we were married when there was nothing more terrifying to worry about than being caught by her father. She drew them down over my thighs, kneading my bulge as she did so. I leant back against the washbasin, eyes closed, while Penny, on her knees in front of me, paid lip service to my virility as you might say.

Suddenly there was a rush of feet up the stairs, and a body launched itself with full force at the bathroom door — we don't usually lock it — and then the catch flew across the room hitting Penny in the small of the back and leaving my six year old framed in the open doorway.

'Mummy, what are you doing?' With Penny being unable to answer, I fell back on my usual explanation —

'Get the hell out of here!'

We should have called it a day then, but I was past the point of no return, *interruptus* or no *interruptus*, and Penny was getting that look in her eyes that says the earth is going to move for her or else. So twenty minutes later, and Penny is past the first tremors and up to hurricane force with the tops being blown off the trees and bridges swaying, when suddenly there's those damn feet flying up the stairs again only this time there's shrieking and yelling into the bargain. There is going to be shrieking and yelling in here too from the look of Penny, so I clap my hand over her mouth while not stopping what I'm doing. From the way she is gripping my thighs, she is not stopping either, but now I try and conduct a sensible conversation. There is a push on the door but we have had the forethought to lie against it, and I push back.

'Daddy daddy you must come now!'

'I'm trying to, you daft brat,' is what I don't say. Instead I reply,

'What is it, darling!' trying not to sound like my balls are in the teeth of Hurricane Hilda, which is the truth.

'Shakin' Stevens is on the telly, daddy, you must see him.'

'Be down in a minute, poppet. You go and watch'.

Silence. Relief. Then:

'Daddy!'

'Why can't I come in?'

'Daddy wants to be on his own in . . . the bathroom.'

'Isn't mummy there, then?'

I can tell this is going to be one of those childish conversations to which there are no answers, only more questions. And things are getting desperate here. We've gone past the roads collapsing, tower blocks toppling, and houses being torn up by the foundations and now we're in for the tidal wave. And I do not want this child out there asking what's that funny noise daddy when Penny is getting a tidal wave.

'Mummy must be in the garage.'

'I don't think she is, daddy.'

'Go and look you daft brat!' Exit child crying; enter long awaited volcanic eruption; curtain.

The next day Penny's parents came over for Sunday lunch. It is always a slightly tense affair. The best that can be said of our relationship is that we tolerate each other. But it wasn't too bad that day and the children were filling in the silences with their usual chat. Then Emma said, 'Guess what, grandpa, daddy and mummy shut themselves in the bathroom yesterday for ever such a long time and daddy said mummy wasn't there but she was really.'

'And I saw her come out,' added Simon, the rat.

I gave Emma a warning glance but she went on.

'Why did you say she wasn't if she was, daddy?' Her face, as she said this, was open and innocent as a flower. Her eyes said how puzzling is this life, how very strange the ways of adults. But I knew that whatever reason I'd got for being in the bathroom I did not want to discuss it over lunch with grandpa. She gave me a look which said it was one up to her.

'Children should be seen and not heard, Emma.' I responded lamely, while grandpa became very engrossed in the cutting of his meat and Penny slunk into the kitchen on the pretext of fetching gravy.

'Yes, but daddy, could I just ask one more question, please, daddy?'

Her excessive politeness should have sounded a warning but we had guests didn't we, what could I do.

'All right, but just one.'

'Why do you keep those ropes tied round the legs of your bed?'

So I know where they are if I need to strangle anyone, I thought. But I just said, 'Simon, get your elbows off the table.'

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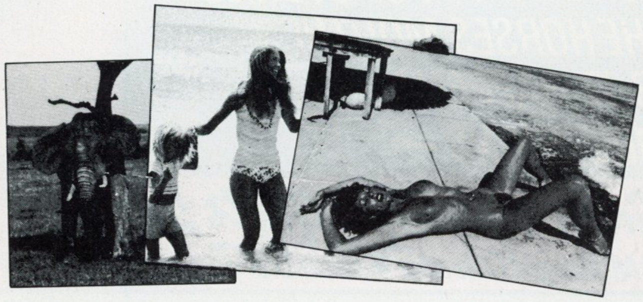

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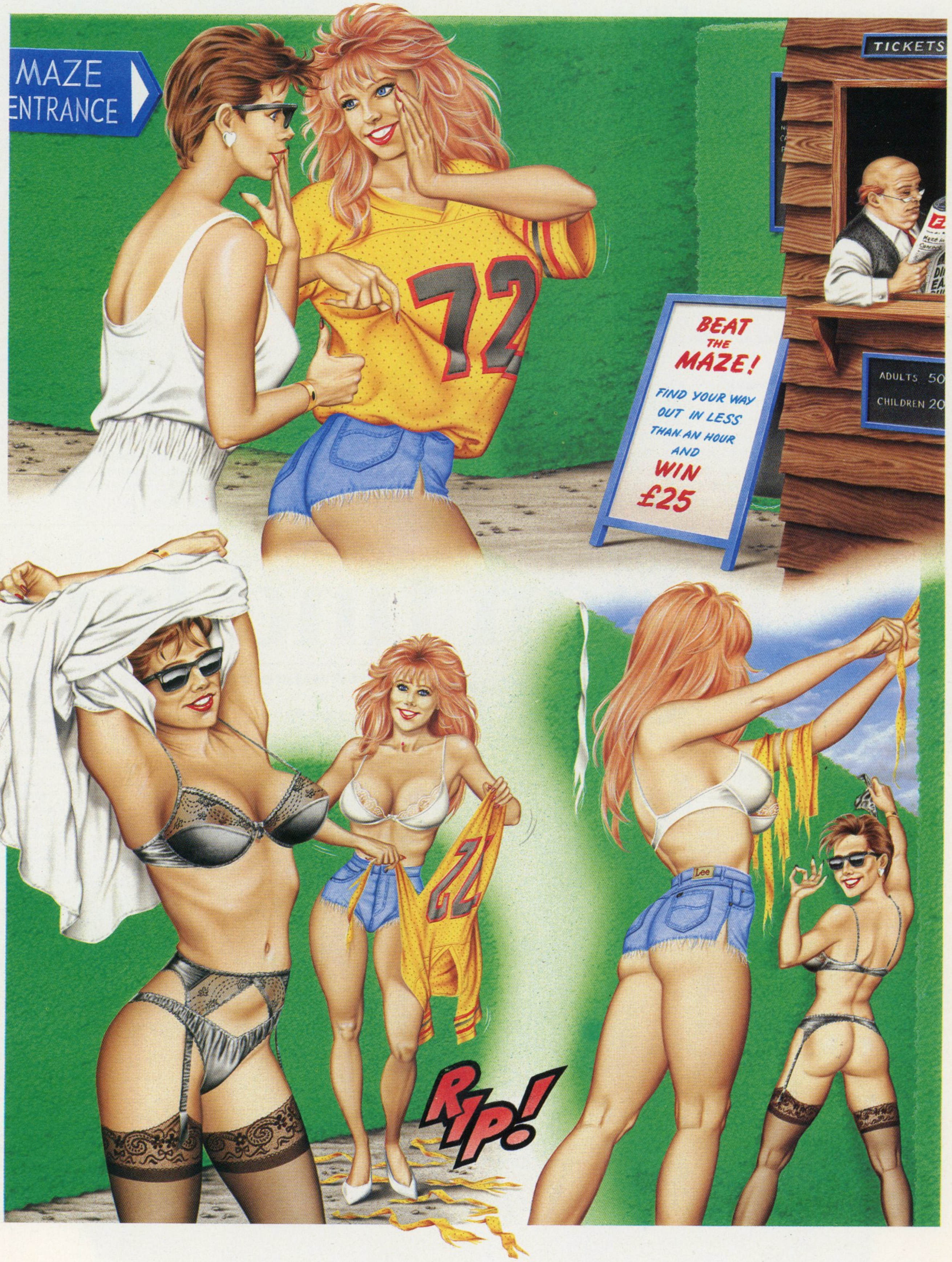
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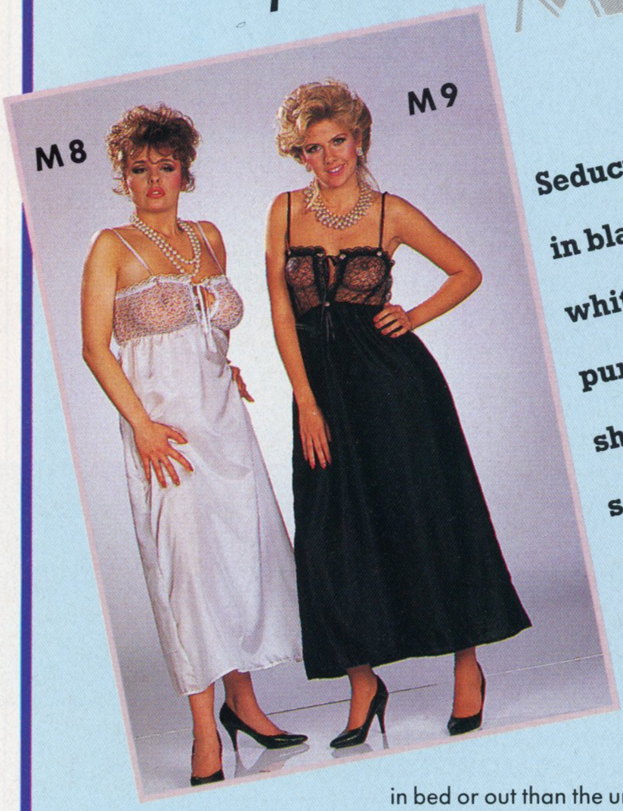

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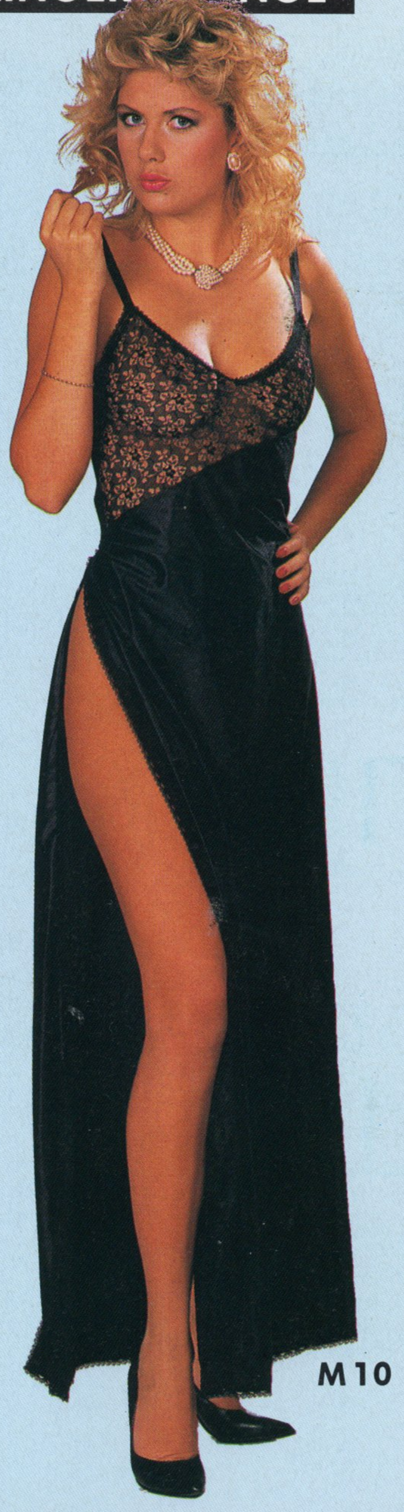

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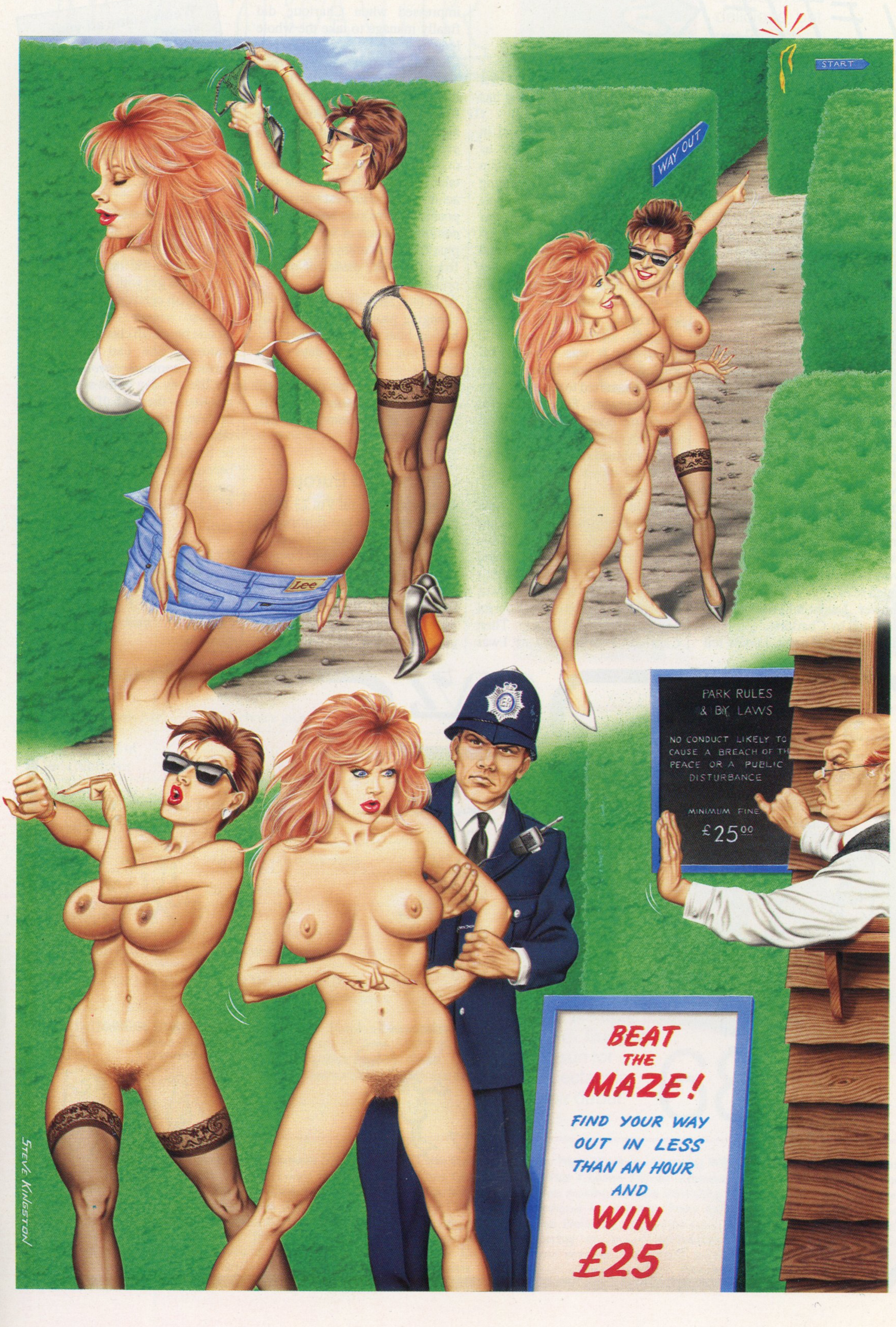
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